



Join us this 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.

Christmas Mission Market

Do you ever struggle to find the right Christmas gift for a special loved one? Let First Christian Church help!

This Sunday, December 12, at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall (during the All Church Sunday School), you will have the opportunity to make a donation in honor of your loved one which supports one of six Outreach Partners of First Christian Church:

- Interfaith Outreach Services
- Faith Mission
- MSU Mustang Pantry
- Allred Chapel
- Disciples Crossing
- Heifer International

At the Christmas Mission Market, you'll be able to select an "item" for purchase or a dollar amount for your donation. Then, you will receive a card which can be given to your loved one naming the gift made in their honor. This is a great way to make gift-giving easy while supporting ministry both locally and internationally.

Fain Sock Tree

The Christmas tree is up in the church office for socks, scarves, hats, gloves, and pajamas for the children at Fain School, and we need to remember to "decorate" the tree with these items. 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 next week before they begin their Christmas holidays. Thank You!

SING!
 WE NOW OF
 CHRISTMAS



All Church Sunday School

Join us this Sunday, December 12th, at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall for an All Church Sunday School. This will be an extension of the "Sing We Now of Christmas" series.



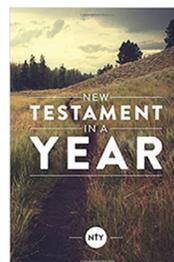
Christmas Eve Services

- December 24, 2021 -

6:00 pm - Traditional Christmas Eve Service

11:00 pm - Carols, Candlelight, and Communion Service

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.

Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender
Senior Minister



Welcoming a New Staff Member

After months of prayerful and diligent searching, I'm pleased to announce that in January we will welcome a new Minister to Youth and Young Adults - Brooke Reid.

Back in mid-September, I received an email from Brooke. She had seen our job posting on the Truett Seminary Connections page and wrote, "I saw your posting...and feel this is a position I could thrive in." In the course of several conversations over the following weeks, our search committee agreed. Our first call with Brooke was designed to be a "meet and greet" - a 20-minute Zoom call where we could learn more about Brooke and she could learn more about the position and First Christian Church of Wichita Falls. That call went over an hour. The search committee immediately connected with Brooke and were impressed by her poise, her responses, and even her questions to us. After we said goodbye to Brooke, the members of the search committee all looked at each other with that look of, "Is this too good to be true?" We felt like we may have found the person God was leading us to call.

Brooke also sent us two documents to help us know more about her approach to ministry. The first was a statement of purpose:

My faith in the love and grace of God is the most important thing in my life. Through every decision and every rocky path, I rely on Him to guide my steps. My relationship with God is the root of who I am. Without trust in the life, death, resurrection and future coming of Jesus Christ, I would not have anything. I believe that the Bible is the divinely inspired, infallible Word of God, and I am encouraged to spread love to those around me by two of my favorite Bible verses, "Let all you do be done in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14) and "Let your love be genuine" (Romans 12:9). I strive to let His light shine through me so that those around me will be encouraged to seek Him. I rely on the Holy Spirit to work within in me as I aspire to serve as a leader and an encourager to my family, friends, and peers. My ultimate purpose in life is to commit myself to a relentless pursuit of an intimate relationship with the Creator, seeking Him in every corner of this world.

The second document was her 22-page Vision of Discipleship with Youth. This document described how she felt ministry WITH youth took place, how she envisioned being the leader of a youth program, how to involve students and adult volunteers in leadership, a volunteer training process, and then a three-year plan which described by teaching topics, focus scriptures, in-person events, and special activities for each month. This document was impressive not just in its scope but also in its thoroughness and depth. We were impressed!

In a traditional search process, the next step would be to bring the candidate in to meet with the search committee. Then, if that went well, the candidate would be brought back to meet with other church leaders and with the constituencies he/she would be serving (e.g. youth, their parents, young adults). The search committee made the decision to accelerate this traditional process and to invite Brooke to Wichita Falls for a full weekend that involved meeting with the search committee, the staff, church leaders, youth and parents, and joining us for worship. That took place on the weekend of October 23, and by the time Brooke left to return to Waco, I had "thumbs up" from every person she had interacted with that weekend.

The search committee then took a few days to pray, asking God to guide our steps, and then forwarded a recommendation to the Personnel Committee indicating that we would like to call Brooke. With blessing from Personnel to enter into negotiations with Brooke, we extended a call to her, which she, after several days of prayer, accepted. We are excited that Brooke will begin her ministry at First Christian on January 3, 2022.

Brooke is in her final year at Truett Seminary. She will graduate with a Masters of Divinity Degree, with a concentration in Family Ministry, next August (2022). Because she will be completing coursework in the Spring, Brooke will be part-time until May. She will be in Wichita Falls each weekend and will be in the office each Monday. The rest of the week, she will be in Waco for classes, but will continue to prepare for upcoming youth and young adult events, and other projects related to her ministry with us. Once the Spring semester is complete, she will move to Wichita Falls and be with us on a full-time basis. The final requirement for the completion of her degree will be a ten-week mentorship that she will do with us over the summer.

Brooke is a native Texan, growing up in Waxahachie. In high school, she played on both the volleyball team and the golf team, and she continues to play both sports for fun. Brooke then went to Baylor where she received a Bachelor of Social Work degree with a minor in Corporate Communication. As her time at Baylor drew to a close, she began to feel a calling towards family ministry, which led her to Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor. In addition to being active in her own church, Brooke has served as a counselor and lifeguard at Pine Cove Silverado, as an intern at the Methodist Children's Home in Waco, and as a youth leader with Journey Christian Community in China Spring.

In the next few weeks, we will be highlighting opportunities for you to welcome Brooke to Wichita Falls. I hope you will find a time to say hello and to offer your help with making our youth and young adult programs a success.

I also hope that you will thank the members of the search committee for the time and diligent effort they gave to this process. The members of the search committee were Maggy Anderson, Ashley Burross, Davidson Cook, Scot Hafley, and Ronnie James.

I am excited for what lies ahead for our congregation. I believe Brooke will be a good fit for our staff and for our vision for family ministry. I hope as you meet Brooke, you will quickly come to the same conclusion!

Mark



FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS



C W F
LUNCHEON

Speaker:
Father Peter Kavanaugh
St. Benedict Orthodox Church

Faith In Our Neighborhood
Monday, December 13 at 11:45AM

Christmas Lunch with MSU International Students

On Friday, December 17th, from 12:00-2:00 pm, FCC will be hosting a Christmas luncheon with Cindy Cummings, Director of the Mustang Food Pantry, for the International students staying in town for the holidays. The lunch will be in the Clark Student Center in the Comanche South Room. This is an opportunity for some fellowship with students that aren't able to travel home during the Christmas break to be with their families.

Anyone who would like to join us please text or call Sally Hastings, 940-224-4416, so we will be sure to have enough food. Market Street will be catering a traditional holiday meal for us. We plan on having some crafts & games also. Look forward to seeing you there!



ONE SERVICE
Christmas Sunday

10:00 am
December 26, 2021

2022 Stewardship Update

We've still got some previous pledgers to follow up with, but so far - here's what we've received toward our 2022 budget in estimates-of-giving (thru 12/6/2021)...

This year's totals - 97 estimates = \$636,073 or \$6,557 average estimate

Last year's final totals - 119 estimates = \$716,377 or \$6,020 average estimate

That's a 9% increase in our average estimate-of-giving...and there are about 26-previous pledgers we've not yet heard back from who estimated their 2021 gifts at \$113,815.

If they all renew their 2022 estimates at the same amount - our totals will end up around \$750,000 or 5% more than last year total estimates.

More to come in our next challenger - THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT !!!

SAVE!
the **DATE!**

Rise Against Hunger
January 8, 2022
Fellowship Hall

Manners Matter Etiquette Class

Manners Matter is an etiquette program for 5th and 6th graders taught by the fun and energetic Dee King. During this program students will learn simple etiquette like handshakes, introductions, small talk, table manners, and cell phone/technology etiquette.

What to know: Dates: Thursdays, January 20-February 17. Times: 6:30-8:00pm except February 17th which is 6:00-8:00pm. Location: First Christian Church. Cost: \$75. Registration is open to all.

Register online at www.firstchristianwf.com

The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on Dec. 22! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Tuesday.

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study! Bring a friend and attend the FCC Men's Breakfast & Bible Study this Friday morning, December 10th, from 7:00-8:00 am, at the Hwy Café, 2808 Jacksboro Hwy.

Board Meeting Notification: The First Christian Church Board will meet in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 19, immediately following the 10:45 am worship service. At this brief meeting, the slate of nominees for 2022 leadership positions will be presented.

Looking for Housing: We are looking for housing (e.g. garage apartment) for Brooke Reid, our new Minister to Youth and Young Adults for January - May 2021. If you have a space available or know of someone who does, please let Mark know

(mark@firstchristianwf.com or 940.692.2282).

Journey Through Scripture will not meet on Sundays, December 26th and January 2nd.

Pantry Sunday for Interfaith Outreach Services: The December collected items are: jelly (small & large) and spaghetti sauce.

From the Mailbox. . .

Dear Coats for Kids Committee,

We thank you for your continued love and blessings you bestow upon the Zundy Community! Your hard work makes such an impact on our campus!

The Zundy Staff

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.

♥**Hospitalized:** at Midwestern Health Care Center is Jimmy Smriglio. Released and back home is Charlie Berry.

♥**Congratulations to Brady & Natalie Archambo** on the birth of their daughter, Kaia Elliana Archambo, on November 17th in Austin TX. Proud grandparents are Larry & Teresa Archambo.

This Sunday:

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”
Matthew 2:1-12
Dr. Mark Bender

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, December 12, 2021
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT / CHRISTMAS SPECIAL OFFERING
8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 All Church Sunday School (Fellowship Hall)
9:30 Christmas Mission Market (Fellowship Hall)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary or Watch the Livestream on YouTube or Facebook.com/FCCWF)
3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)
5:00-7:00 “A Night in Bethlehem” (Fellowship Hall)
Monday, December 13, 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)
10:30 CWF Board Meeting (Rm 310)
11:45 CWF Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)
6:30 FCC Staff Christmas Party
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)
Tuesday, December 14, 2021
9:30 FCC Staff Mtg / Worship Planning (Rm 310)
6:00 Property Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)
6:00 World Outreach Ministry Meeting (Fellowship Hall)
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries “CGRM” Support Groups (Rm 304-308)
7:00 Worship Ministry Meeting (Scout Hall)
Wednesday, December 15, 2021
7:00 Elders’ Breakfast (Rm 405)
9:00-10:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)
10:00 YAS Caroling in the Church Office
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, December 16, 2021
6:00 CCF Staff Christmas Party
Friday, December 17, 2021
9:00-10:00 CCF Music (Rm 300)
3:00 CCF Christmas Parties (Classrooms)
Sunday, December 19, 2021
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT / CHRISTMAS SPECIAL 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 Church Board Meeting (Sanctuary)
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 (Grades K-5) (Rms 402 & 405)
Monday, December 20, 2021
Young Ages Preschool Closed Until January 5
7:30-6:00 Children Come First “CCF” (M-Th)
9:00-10:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)
12:00 CWF Group 3 (Parlor)
1:30 CWF Group 1 (Rm 310)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)
Tuesday, December 21, 2021
9:00 CCF Santa Pictures (Parlor)
9:30 FCC Staff Mtg / Worship Planning (Rm 310)
6:00 Stewardship Ministry Mtg (Rm 310)
6:30 CGRM Support Groups (Rm 304-308)
Wednesday, December 22, 2021
7:00 Elders’ Breakfast (Rm 405)
9:00-10:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)
1:00 Stretch Class (Gym)
NO Wednesday Evening Activities
Thursday, December 23, 2021
9:00 CCF Polar Express (Rm 300)
5:00 CCF Closes Early
Friday, December 24, 2021
Church Offices & All Programs Closed
6:00 Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)
11:00 Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)
Saturday, December 25, 2021
MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

12/12: Sherry Tucker, Sandra Ross; Dwight Ross III, Presiding
12/19: Gary Ballard, Kerry Roach; Cathy Biggs, Presiding

DECEMBER DIACONATE SERVERS

Shirley Craft, Ronnie James, Margaret Phillips, Fred & Jane Ridenour, Twila Boydston, Marc Cannedy, Leann Elder, Jaiden “JJ” Johnson, Sheila Reynolds, Tyler Thomas, Julia Ward, Emily Thomas.

DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION PREPARATION

12/12: Tyler Thomas & Emily Thomas
12/19: Julia Ward & Shirley Craft

DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION VISITATION

12/12: Twila Boydston, Shirley Craft, Ronnie James
12/19: Marc Cannedy, Fred Ridenour, Jane 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
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. 30)	29
Neighborhood (Wed., Dec. 1)	22
Sunday School (Sun. Dec. 5)	73
Worship (Dec. 5):	
8:40am Worship Service	30
10:45am Worship Service	201
Total Worship	253
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$19,336.85
Sunday Receipts for 12/5/21	\$20,889.00
Through Nov. 30: Income \$897,351.29	Expenses \$929,549.76

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