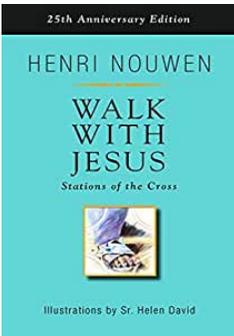




On Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall, the Chancel Choir along with the Christian Men's Fellowship is presenting "Love Notes", a musical evening of food and song. Join us for a steak dinner prepared by our CMF and for entertainment by the choir. You'll hear solos and group numbers all performed by our choir and our MSU Choir Scholars!

The cost is \$15 per person, and you can make reservations by calling the church office.

All proceeds go to benefit the MSU Choir Scholars fund which allows us to provide stipends for the MSU Choir students who sing in our Chancel Choir.



**2023 Lenten Bible Study**  
**Walk With Jesus**  
 by Henri Nouwen

*Walk With Jesus* by Henri Nouwen is inspired by a series of drawings by Sr. Helen David and represents traditional Stations of the Cross through the passion and suffering of the world's poor. In these images Nouwen sees the ongoing passion of Christ.

Although the drawings are stark and moving, they do not lead to despair. Rather, Nouwen points out, they unite our own broken humanity with the humanity of the men, women, and children portrayed. This union becomes possible, Nouwen believes, through the suffering and risen body of Jesus. In him and through his divine love, our world can become one just as he and his father are one.

Join Sheri Sutton for this 7-week study. **There will be two in-person options for this study:**

- **Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am** beginning on February 22, 2023; and,
- **Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm** beginning on March 1, 2023.

Both sessions will meet in Room 310. A Zoom option will be offered at both times as well with the sign-in information available before the first session.

Please call the church office at (940) 692-2282 to register and order your book. **Please read the Publisher's Note, Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1 before the first session.**

**Diaconate Training**

This Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>  
 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary

**Participate in a Ministry  
 of the Church in 2023!**

You make a difference! The gifts you bring, combined with the power of Christ at work within us, enable First Christian Church to accomplish more than we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). Therefore, each member of the congregation is encouraged to participate in one or more of the ministries that further the church's mission, both on our front doorsteps and to the ends of the earth.

No prior experience is required. All that is needed is a passionate willingness to further the ministry of the church. Indicate where you would like to serve by checking the box beside one or more of the ministries below.

- ( ) **COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY** –  
 - Cindy Hernandez, Chair
- ( ) **EVANGELISM** – Chris Showalter, Chair
- ( ) **FAITH FORMATION** – Ashley Burross, Chair
- ( ) **MEMBERSHIP & FELLOWSHIP** –  
 - Susan Buckley, Chair
- ( ) **PROPERTY** – Rick Appling, Chair
- ( ) **STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE**  
 - Jerry Johnson & Eddie Tucker, Co-Chairs
- ( ) **WORLD OUTREACH & COMMUNITY SERVICE**  
 - Kim Ballard, Chair
- ( ) **WORSHIP & FINE ARTS** – Teresa Archambo, Chair

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

(Work) \_\_\_\_\_

If you plan to stay on the same Ministry as you served on in 2022, please still fill out this form and return it so that we may also confirm phone numbers and email addresses, otherwise you may be removed from the 2023 Ministry listing. **THANK YOU!!!**

**Don't forget...Church Board Members are expected to serve on a Ministry.**

# Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender  
Senior Minister



## The Need for Intentionality

When I was first starting out in youth ministry 25 years ago, Jim Burns was one of my mentors. I never met him; in fact, I think we were only in the same room once...and that was with 8,000 other youth ministers at a convention. But, Jim's wisdom and experience helped shape my ministry and the way to think about faith. Recently, as I was thinking about the idea of being intentional in our spiritual growth (the topic of my last *Make Your Mark* column), I came across an article I had saved from Jim Burns. Interestingly, though, this article was about the things that lead to a loss of faith.

Here's what Jim wrote in an article titled, "The Anatomy of a Loss of Faith":

*Tony Campolo once gave a talk at the National Youth Workers Convention called, "When Your Kid Walks Away from Faith." It was obvious he was in deep pain over his son walking away from Jesus. Though I only heard about 10 minutes of the talk, I thought he made a great comment about staying strong in the faith. He said, "When people quit listening to the Word of God, singing about God, being stimulated in their faith with other people, and never spend time exercising their faith, the natural result is that their faith will fade. If you don't use a muscle, the muscle will atrophy. So, if you don't exercise your faith, your faith will atrophy."*

*Tony believes that people don't lose their faith in a one-time event, but that it slowly erodes away if we don't exercise our faith. I guess it's a lot like any other relationship. If you don't pay attention to a person, the relationship fades. It doesn't mean the person isn't there, it just means the relationship fades. Paul's advice to Timothy, "Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." To have a vibrant faith takes energy and focus - the discipline of being around others who stimulate you toward deeper faith.*

*As it turns out, Tony was right. Growing in your faith is a discipline. It takes time, sacrifice and energy on a continual basis over years. You are either moving toward growth or atrophy (away from faith). Most people know what it takes to get in shape - they just don't do it. The same is true with our faith.*

*I was recently rummaging through some old notes of mine and found an outline called, "The Anatomy of a Crash: A Six Step Movement Away from Jesus." It wasn't my own notes and I don't remember where I got the outline, but I want to share it with you. It has profound insight on how we or our children walk from faith.*



## 1. Neglect

*People simply neglect putting energy into their faith. They neglect Jesus. Many times, it starts with small compromises. (Hebrews 2:1-3)*

## 2. Drift

*Usually a drift of faith is not intentional but rather it's more about doing nothing and allowing the events and circumstances of life to take us away from God. Some people don't even realize they have been drifting until they look up one day and realize they are far from God.*

## 3. Unbelief (Lack of Trust)

*Faith or trust in God and an attitude of independence cannot co-exist. Usually I don't find people "anti-God" but rather they simply aren't putting their trust in his love and care as much as they are depending on their own resources. Frankly, I'm not very impressed with most people who try to do life on their own. We quickly find out that we are finite. I've never fully understood why people would try to do life and relationships on their own when God's purpose is so much more appealing. But because of neglect and drift, unbelief seems to come more naturally.*

## 4. Disobedience

*Disobedience is an act of will. Jesus gave us great insight in John 14:21. "Whoever has my commands and keeps (obeys) them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show (reveal) myself to them. "When we are obedient to God, it shows we love God and Jesus promises to reveal himself to us. In disobedience, it's much harder to see God.*

## 5. Dull of Hearing (Hardness of Heart)

*When someone doesn't exercise their faith, they become insensitive to God and unable to experience the promptings of the Holy Spirit.*

## 6. Forfeiting Your Spiritual Potential

*The last step is that these people live under the consequence of their sin and they forfeit God's presence in their life.*

*Of course, the answer is to reconcile with God. To surrender your will to the will of God. Admit that you have been missing the mark. Engage back into your faith and reestablish fellowship with God. There is always the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. The good news is we can always come back to God and live under His presence. The bad news is that some will choose to neglect and drift with some awful circumstances of their own choosing.*

Both Jim (and Tony Campolo) are right in noting that growing in your faith is a discipline...one that needs to be exercised. And, to prevent our faith muscle from atrophying, Campolo suggested we be intentional in what we do. So, whether you are on top-of-the-world in your walk with Jesus Christ or are feeling a little dry spiritually, let's grow and strengthen our faith by listening to the word of God in worship, in Bible Studies, and in small groups. Let's sing about God in worship and on our own. Let's challenge ourselves to go deeper as we study scripture and theology and what it means to be a disciple in a community of others taking up the same challenge. These are just a few of the things we can do to be sure we're maintaining a healthy focus on our spiritual life.

Mark

# FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS



## Welcome New Members!

It was a joy to welcome Dr. Louis & Julie Wilson into our fellowship on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, during the Chapel service. Louis is a Gastroenterologist with WF Gastroenterology Associates. Their contact information is 2103 Avondale, 76308. Welcome, Louis & Julie!

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

**College Bible Study – Thursday Evenings:** Join Brooke and fellow students on Thursday evenings for fellowship and Bible Study beginning this Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, in our new college classroom, Room 305, at 6:00 pm. For more information contact Brooke Reid at 940-692-2282 or brooke@firstchristianwf.com or follow the **FCC Wichita Falls College Ministry** on Instagram (@fccwf\_college).

**Pantry Sunday for Interfaith Outreach Services:** The **January** items are canned fruit and canned meat (Vienna sausage, spam, chili, tuna, but NO chicken, please).

The **February** items will be spaghetti sauce and peanut butter.

**Interfaith is in need of regular size paper grocery sacks.** If you have any to spare, please drop them off in the large box on the porch by the Chapel entrance.

You can continue to help keep the pantry shelves filled by: Donating the monthly items or any type of food items directly anytime into the large box on the porch by the Chapel entrance. To support Interfaith with a financial gift, you may mail your donation to Interfaith (1101 11<sup>th</sup> St., Wichita Falls, TX 76301), or donate on their website.

## Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at Hospice is Patt Giddings. Released and back home are Joe Bauer, Harvey “Bud” Love, and Kristin Schuele.

♥Our condolences are extended to Dennis, Jodi & Bret Schmidt & Family on learning of the death of Debi Schmidt on January 16<sup>th</sup> in Georgetown TX. Services will be held at a future date.

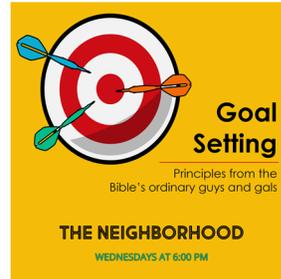
♥We extend our condolences to Joe Vaccarella & Family on learning of the death of his father, Leon Vaccarella, on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Services will be this Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am at Hampton Vaughn Funeral Home.

♥We extend our sympathies to Jennifer Tucker Rodgers, Eddie Tucker and Sherry Tucker & Families on learning of the death of Jennifer’s husband and Eddie & Sherry’s son-in-law, Christopher Rodgers, on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Services will be held this Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 pm at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, 14114 Hillcrest Road, Dallas TX 75254.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Karen Watson & Family on learning of the death of her mother, Lita Watson, on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Services will be Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

♥Congratulations to Abigail & Chance Craig on the birth of their daughter, Heidi Charlotte Craig, on January 8<sup>th</sup>. Proud great-grandparents are Glenda & Frank Tate and Fred & Susie Gentry.

Sundays at  
8:40 am | Chapel  
10:45 am | Sanctuary



Wednesdays at  
*The Neighborhood*  
6:00 pm | Fellowship Hall



## Pastor's Class

Pastor's Class is a 6-week study for children 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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 6 sessions being held on Sundays from February 26<sup>th</sup> to April 2<sup>nd</sup>, your child will learn along peers and seasoned congregation members the foundations of our faith and what it means to be a follower and disciple of Jesus Christ. If you have a child who is interested in attending, please contact Claire Baer at 940-692-2282 or claire@firstchristianwf.com.

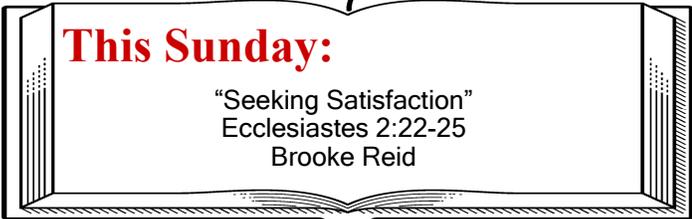


## Mark your Calendars for 2023 Summer Camps

Summer will be here before you know it and now is the time to block off your calendar for summer camps at Disciples Crossing.

DC Family Camp	May 26-28
DC Grand Camp	June 2-4
DC Youth Camp (6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	June 19-24
Imago Dei (6 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> grade)	June 25 - July 1
DC Kids Camp 1 (1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	June 26-30
DC Kids Camp 2 (1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	July 31 - August 4

Registration for summer camps open on February 19, 2023. Learn more at [firstchristianwf.com/summercamps](http://firstchristianwf.com/summercamps).



# This Sunday:

“Seeking Satisfaction”  
Ecclesiastes 2:22-25  
Brooke Reid

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Sunday, January 22, 2023

8:40 Worship (Chapel)  
9:30 Sunday School / Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)  
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary or Join the Livestream on YouTube or Facebook.com/FCCWF)

3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)  
5:00 Young Disciples Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)  
5:00 Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
6:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402/405)

### Monday, January 23, 2023

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, January 24, 2023

9:30 FCC Staff Meeting / Worship Planning (Rm 310)  
10:00 YAS Music (Rm 300)  
12:00-2:00 YAS Staff Meeting (Rm 405)  
6:00 Executive Council Meeting (Rm 310)  
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries “CGRM” Support Groups

### Wednesday, January 25, 2023

7:00 Elders’ Breakfast (Rm 405)  
9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)  
10:00 YAS Music (Rm 300)  
NO Stretch Class (Parlor)  
5:30 MSU Mustang Meal & Neighborhood Brown Bag Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)

6:00 Neighborhood Worship Service (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 First Kidz (PreK-5th Grade) (Rm 402/405)  
7:00 Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
7:00 Chancel Choir (Grades 9-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

### Thursday, January 26, 2023

6:00 College Bible Study (Rm 305)  
6:30-8:00 Manners Matter (Fellowship Hall)

### Friday, January 27, 2023

9:00 CCF Music (Rm 300)  
1:00 Memorial Service for Lita Watson (Sanctuary)

### Sunday, January 29, 2023

8:40 Worship (Chapel)  
9:30 Sunday School / Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)  
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary or Join the Livestream on YouTube or Facebook.com/FCCWF)

3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)  
5:00 Young Disciples Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)  
5:00 Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
6:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402/405)

### Monday, January 30, 2023

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, January 31, 2023

9:30 FCC Staff Meeting / Worship Planning (Rm 310)  
10:00 YAS Music (Rm 300)  
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries “CGRM” Support Groups

### Wednesday, February 1, 2023

7:00 Elders’ Breakfast (Rm 405)  
9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)  
10:00 YAS Music (Rm 300)  
1:00 Stretch Class (Parlor)  
5:30 Brown Bag Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 Neighborhood Worship Service (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 First Kidz (PreK-5th Grade) (Rm 402/405)  
7:00 Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
7:00 Chancel Choir (Grades 9-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

### Thursday, February 2, 2023

6:00 College Bible Study (Rm 305)  
6:30-8:00 Manners Matter (Fellowship Hall)

### Friday, February 3, 2023

9:00 CCF Music (Rm 300)

## SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

1/22: Teresa Archambo, Woody Gossom; Scot Hafley, Presiding  
1/29: Linda C. Carr, Robert Hernandez; Bill Jennings, Presiding

## JANUARY DIACONATE SERVERS

Debi & Larry Ballard, Lee Bybee, Sarah Cook, Bob Hayes, LyDora Martin, Caitlin Barker, Charles & Jeanna Berry, Davidson Cook, Debbie & Mark Turnbow, Ethan Earley.

## DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION PREPARATION

1/22: Debbie & Mark Turnbow 1/29: Sarah Cook & Davidson Cook

## DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION VISITATION

1/22: Debbie Turnbow, Ethan Earley, Mark Turnbow  
1/29: Debi Ballard, Larry Ballard, Lee Bybee

## 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
Brooke Reid, Director of Youth & Young Adults			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
Elizabeth Ivey, 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			

## FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Jan. 10) . . . . .	11	
Neighborhood (Wed., Jan. 11) . . . . .	16	
Sunday School (Sun. Jan. 15) . . . . .	66	
Worship (Jan. 15): 8:40am Worship Service . . . . .	33	
10:45am Worship Service . . . . .	198	
Total Worship . . . . .	247	
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week		\$21,040.06
Sunday Receipts for 1/15/23		\$11,790.00
Through Jan. 16: Income \$49,241.49		Expenses \$74,997.76

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