

Thanksgiving Baskets



If you have not returned your filled sack, please return the filled sack to the church office or the Fellowship Hall stage as soon as possible. Also, please return your Turkey Donation envelopes to the church office.

If you have signed up to deliver the Baskets, please gather in the East parking lot at 9:45 am on

Saturday, November 18. You can remain in your car as we line the cars up and 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 these baskets to local families, you will be richly blessed.

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7 Seminaries & Divinity Houses

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Your Thanksgiving Offering will be Part of a 129 Year Legacy of Educational Support



2023 Thanksgiving Offering

The Thanksgiving Offering will benefit the Colleges, Universities, Seminaries, and Divinity Houses affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and will be received on Sundays, November 12th & 19th. Please give generously to this offering. Your gift makes a difference in the lives of our students and it makes a difference in the world.

Fain Sock Tree

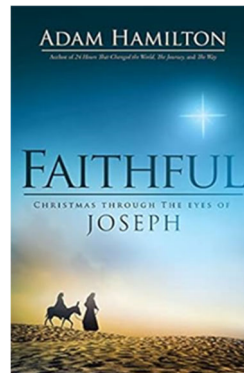


It's time to be thinking about gathering socks, scarves, hats, and gloves for the children at Fain School. NO pj's this year. The Christmas tree will go up in the church office next week, and we need to remember to "decorate" the tree with these items. The kids will get out for Christmas break on December 15th, so we will deliver these items on December 11th.

Our congregation always comes through to help these children. They get so excited when the tree is put up at Faith and decorated with all of these items.

Sheri Sutton's 2023 Advent Bible Study *Faithful*

by Adam Hamilton



In *Faithful*, Hamilton takes us on a journey from Joseph's beginnings as a humble carpenter to his all-important role as the earthly father of Jesus Christ. Joseph's place in the nativity story is sometimes overlooked but contains valuable lessons for all of us.

Absent from much of the biblical narrative, Joseph never spoke a word, but his courageous actions were crucial to the birth of Christ and God's salvation plan for humanity. His story is much like our own as we encounter circumstances that we would never

have chosen for ourselves. At times, it can be tempting just to walk away, but Joseph provides us a great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand and faithfully moving forward in the strength that God provides.

Join Sheri Sutton for this 4-week study beginning November 29, 2023. **There will be two in-person options for this study: Wednesday mornings at 10:15am and Wednesday evenings at 5:30pm.** 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. **Read Chapter 1 before the first session.**

Christmas Mission Market



Do you have someone who is difficult to shop for? Someone who seems to have everything already? Why not give them the gift of transformed lives?

On Sunday, December 3, at 9:30 am we will be holding our third annual Christmas Mission Market and All Church Sunday School Class in the Fellowship Hall. That morning, you will have

the opportunity to make donations to one of the following outreach partners of First Christian Church in honor of your loved one: James V. Allred Prison Chapel, Disciples Crossing Camp, Faith Mission/Faith Refuge, Heifer International, Interfaith Outreach Services, Wichita County Meals on Wheels, and Wichita Falls Area Food Bank. And while you do, your donations will go to support the work of these organizations in the coming year.

Mark your calendars for the Christmas Mission Market and All Church Sunday School Class on December 3, and the opportunity to make a difference in our community, region, and world.

Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender
Senior Minister



Open Eyes and Open Hands

This Saturday, members and friends of First Christian Church will be heading out to deliver Thanksgiving Baskets to members of our community. This ministry, now in its 13th year, has been a blessing to families in our community - families identified by the counselors at WFISD elementary schools. But it has also been a blessing to those who make the deliveries. I thought you might want to hear a few of the stories that have been shared with us:

In 2011, we delivered 50 baskets to Fain and Sam Houston Elementary families. When I compiled the routes, there was one family that was in an area separated from the other deliveries. I decided to deliver that one, but I would do it after the routes were completed. Deliveries started at 9:00 am, and it was close to 11:00 am when I arrived. An elderly man was sitting in a wheelchair in the driveway. As soon as I got out of the car he asked if I was bringing a Thanksgiving basket. He told me he was sitting outside because he might not hear me knock (I think he had been sitting there all morning). He told me that he had custody of his two grandchildren. With tears in his eyes, he thanked me profusely and said he was so excited to get the turkey - he could not even remember the last time that he had gotten to eat turkey. He made my heart happy that day.

Some of our members came back to the church surprised that Wichita Falls had pockets of poverty. They went to areas of town that they had never visited before.

The first year [we] were apprehensive that 50 baskets would be filled and that enough members would come to deliver. But, of course, the baskets and the drivers showed up in abundance. The support of this congregation has been phenomenal.

One time, we picked up three of the baskets from church and headed over to the Sunnyside addition just north of highway 287 on the east side of Wichita Falls. The lawn and house looked weathered and bleak. We carried the basket to the front step and knocked on the door. A small young boy answered and opened the door just ajar until we identified ourselves and told him of our food delivery. He then told us that he was there alone. As he opened the door further to allow me to pass the basket to him we looked into the front room. It was filled with beds and cots, blankets and sheets, all in disarray strewn around the room. I could not see how he would be able to carry the food basket past the clutter to a kitchen. He turned and looked us straight in our eyes and thanked us graciously. We both had trouble getting back to our car through the tears that had welled up as we stepped off the stoop. The tears swelled in our eyes, but swelled our hearts with compassion. We are ready to go again.

I have delivered the Thanksgiving Baskets for many years. After I deliver the baskets each year, I feel that I am

the one who is blessed for being able to share the food with others and to make Thanksgiving Day special for them. One particular delivery I remember - The dad asked us to bring the food inside and his little boy, about 4 or 5, wanted to know if he could touch the turkey! I said of course he could. His eyes lit up as if he really didn't know what to expect. I told him it was ok to touch the cold turkey but remember after it was cooked it would be hot and would taste sooo good and he would always remember that delicious taste.

I got to deliver to the same family several years in a row. They lived in the Habitat for Humanity neighborhood across from Washington Elementary. The first year there were two children and the mother was pregnant. The next year, I got to meet the new baby - and then for several years, I got to see those little children each year and that was a blessing to me.

Thanksgiving Baskets for our family has been a tradition since our oldest was 3 years old and our youngest was an infant! They like getting the boxes prepped. This is very hands on and lots of small details.

But the most amazing gifts are the life lessons that take place while we deliver the meals to the homes. Our kids are being exposed to all parts and zip codes of our community. They get to see where others come from and where others live. They get to see that not everyone has a safe home, or not everyone has a fun backyard, or a working car. Then when we get done dropping these baskets off, we get back in the car and get to have those conversations privately as a family. They start asking questions and pondering about things. And when we're in our car driving away, it's a safe place to have these conversations. They get exposed to some real-world lessons. The conversations get us choked up and emotional sometimes. We feel very grateful for what all He has done and provided for us. Hopefully our kids will grow up to be very humble in life after they see that not everyone looks like us, talks like us, or even lives like us. But by doing this project they hopefully learn that we can love like He loves all of us! I am very thankful that First Christian Church has so many opportunities for all age groups to be hands-on.

As you can see, delivering these baskets can be an eye-opening experience. In our usual patterns and routines, we don't always see the need around us. But in the hour or so it takes to make a delivery, participants get a new perspective on our community.

In addition to that, I like that these basket deliveries take place in the days and weeks before Advent. The awareness that ministries like this provide remind us of the work we need to do this Advent and Christmas season. Jesus didn't come to a world where there was no need to be found. He came, and still comes, to a world where people need - not just a turkey and all the trimmings, but also the eyes to see as Christ sees. Most of all, he came to a world that needs what only Jesus Christ can provide. And, when we deliver baskets, we are representing (that is, re-presenting) Jesus to the world - a savior who is the hope of the world.

Mark



FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Commitment Sunday Luncheon

Be sure to let us know you will join us for lunch this Sunday, November 19, immediately following the 10:45 am service. Make your reservation by calling the church office at 940-692-2282

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



Interfaith Outreach Services Pantry Sunday



The **November** item is soup and saltine crackers. **Interfaith is always in need of regular size paper grocery sacks.** You may drop off any of the monthly requested items or paper sacks at any time in the large box on the porch by the Chapel entrance.

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

Thank You!

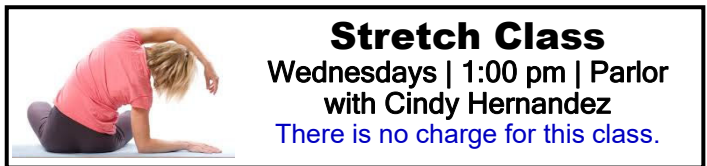
The Christian Women's Fellowship would like to say, "Thank You" to all that joined them for their Ghostly Tea this year.



Wednesdays at
The Neighborhood
6:00 pm | Fellowship Hall

Stretch Class

Wednesdays | 1:00 pm | Parlor
with Cindy Hernandez
There is no charge for this class.



Manners Matter 2024



Manners Matter is a six-week etiquette program for 5th & 6th graders taught by the fun and energetic Dee King. Students will learn simple etiquette like handshakes, introductions, table manners, phone/technology etiquette, and much more. Courses take

place on Thursdays, January 11 - February 15. The cost is \$100. Registration will open on the First Christian Website on December 1.

The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on Nov. 29! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Tuesday.

Pickleball! Join us for Pickleball on Sundays at 3:00 pm in the Gym. No experience required, on the court instruction, and it's loads of fun. For more information contact Colleen James or Susan Buckley.

College Bible Study - Monday Afternoons: Join Brooke and fellow students on Monday afternoons for fellowship and Bible Study in our college classroom, Room 305, at 4:00 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).

Save the Date - New Pictorial Directory Coming Soon!



Does it seem like it's been a while since we last did a Pictorial Directory at the church? You're right - the last full-fledged directory was in 2012. While our database system allows us to update member photos regularly and provide contact information through

the Unite app, a Pictorial Directory functions like a yearbook. It says "here is our church *this year*."

That's why we want you to mark your calendars for February 9-11, 2024. That weekend, photographers from Savant Photography will be here to take your picture for our 2024 FCC Pictorial Directory. (A makeup date will also be available if you cannot be present for a photo that weekend). Later this Fall, you will have the opportunity to sign up for a time slot. But for now, mark that weekend on your calendar and make it a point to gather the family for your Directory photo.

Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at URHCS is Debbie Carlton; at Baylor Rehab-Dallas: Jane Long. Released and back home are Curtis Dolberry, Joe Huff, Mark Pease.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Kathleen Lauck & Dalton Lauck on learning of the death of their father, Ted Lauck, on November 6th. Services were held on November 10th in the Sanctuary.

♥Our condolences are extended to Dwight Ross III and Family on learning of the death of his mother, Grady Ross, on November 14th. Services will be held on Monday, December 20th, at 10:00 am in the Sanctuary.

♥We extend our sympathies to G-Ann Martin and Family on learning of the death of her husband, David Martin, on November 15th in Georgetown TX. G-Ann may be reached at 940-733-4790, and her address is 1330 W University Apt. 1414, Georgetown TX 78628.

♥Congratulations to Chelsea & Nathan McKee on the birth of their daughter, Clara James McKee, on November 11th in Columbia MO. She weighed 6 lbs. 15 oz. and was 17 1/2 inches long. Proud grandparents are Jodi & Mark Bender and aunt, Abby Bender.

This Sunday:

"The Habit of Generosity"
2 Corinthians 8:1-15
Dr. Mark R. Bender

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, November 19, 2023 COMMITMENT SUNDAY /

THANKSGIVING OFFERING

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)

12:00 Commitment Sunday Fellowship Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

3:00 Pickleball (Gym)

3:45 Chancel Ringers (Stratten Hall)

5:00 Young Disciples Choir (Grades K-5)

5:00 Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Room 403/Gym)

5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Room 402)

Monday, November 20, 2023

7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-W)

Young Ages Preschool "YAS" Closed This Week

9:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)

1:00 CWF Group 1 (1723 Shoal Creek)

4:00 College Bible Study (Rm 305)

6:00 Leadership Development Committee Meeting (Rm 310)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

9:30 FCC Staff Mtg/Worship Planning (Rm 310)

6:00 Stewardship Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)

6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Groups (Rms 304, 306, 308)

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405)

9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)

NO Wednesday Evening Activities

Thursday, November 23, 2023

THANKSGIVING

Church Building, Offices & All Programs Closed

Friday, November 24, 2023

Church Building, Offices & All Programs Closed

Sunday, November 26, 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)

3:00 Pickleball (Gym)

3:45 Chancel Ringers (Stratten Hall)

NO Young Disciples Choir (Grades K-5)

NO Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Room 403/Gym)

NO Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Room 402)

Monday, November 27, 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)

4:00 College Bible Study (Rm 305)

6:00 Leadership Development Committee Meeting (Rm 310)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

9:30 FCC Staff Mtg/Worship Planning (Rm 310)

10:00 YAS Music (Tues./Wed.) (Rm 300)

6:00 Executive Council Meeting (Rm 310)

6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Groups (Rms 304, 306, 308)

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405)

9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)

10:15 Sheri Sutton's Advent Bible Study (Rm 310)

1:00 Stretch Class (Parlor)

5:30 Sheri Sutton's Advent Bible Study (Rm 310)

5:30 The Neighborhood Brown Bag Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)

6:00 The Neighborhood Worship Service (Fellowship Hall)

6:00 First Kidz (Pre-K-5) (Rm 402)

6:00 Youth Bible Study (Grades 6-12) (Rm 305)

7:00 Youth Fellowship (Grades 6-12) (Rm 402/Gym)

7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Friday, December 1, 2023

Manners Matters Registration Opens on FCC Website

9:00 CCF Music (Rm 300)

SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

11/19: Linda C. Carr, Chris Showalter; Fred Gentry, Presiding
11/26: David Collins, Harry Tonemah; Polly Tonemah, Presiding

NOVEMBER DIACONATE SERVERS

Jim LaValley, Captain; Kyle Burross, Co-Captain
Ashley Burross, Claudine Farrell, Ann Kable, Sherry Martin, Sherry Tucker, Brandi & Jody Brannon, Lynette Gill, Fred Ridenour, Amy P. Smith, Christopher McKenzie.

DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION PREPARATION

11/19: Brandi & Jody Brannon 11/26: Claudine Farrell & Sherry Tucker

DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION VISITATION

11/19: Ashley Burross, Kyle Burross, Ann Kable
11/26: Brandi Brannon, Jody Brannon, Sherry Tucker

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., Nov. 7)	4
Neighborhood (Wed., Nov. 8)	31
Sunday School (Sun. Nov. 12)	71
Worship (Nov. 12): 8:40am Worship Service	35
10:45am Worship Service	213
Total Worship	279
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$22,566.58
Sunday Receipts for 11/12/23	\$13,778.00
Through Nov. 13: Income \$877,216.67	Expenses \$1,014,806.71

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