

The Beacon

A Newsletter of
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Texas City, Texas

Volume 2012, No. 1

Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship 10:45 am

January 2012

Advent ~ Christmas at FCC



"WE ARE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, A MOVEMENT FOR WHOLENESS IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD.
AS PART OF THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST, WE WELCOME ALL TO THE LORD'S TABLE
AS GOD HAS WELCOMED US."

• DISCIPLES OF CHRIST STATEMENT OF IDENTITY

Blessings Abound ~ Celebrating Life!



We were privileged to welcome Phoenix Ray and Joaquin Ray Hernandez into our lives with a Rosebud Presentation and Blessing. They are the twin sons of Eddie and Jennifer Hernandez and grandsons of Richard and Arlene Hernandez and Mary Pena and George Pena. Richard, the very proud grandfather, is a member of our Sanctuary Choir. The boys were born on September 21, 2011

Moments from December ~ Holiday Happenings!



Capturing memories (l—r):

The Annual VBS picture quilt was added to during this years VBS.

Gingerbread Houses helped to celebrate the season.

The Lescoe Family Memorial Garden shined with the season!



Van Go-Update!



Start saving a few dollars each payday...we are planning a Van Go event to the Cheesecake Factory in Houston for lunch and, of course, cheesecake. If you have suggestions for other outings you would like to participate in (and bring a friend)...please see Lanette Leining!

Thanks

Thanks to everyone who helped make the tiny bird feeder ornaments that were “parting gifts” following the beautiful Christmas Eve service. We had fun assembling and sharing them!

Piecemakers

The Piecemakers Quilting group will begin meeting again on Wednesday, January 11th at 9:00 am in the quilting room, next to the Pastor’s apartment.

You are most welcome to join them as they plan their next quilting project to raffle and to work on personal projects.

Staff

Minister Emeritus	Rev. David Mills
Music Director	Scott Smeltzer
Accompanist	Matthew Todd
Nursery Attendant	Andrina Johnican
Asst. Nursery Attendant	Chris Garza
Maintenance/Custodian	Steve Oberholtzer
Admin. Assistant	Margaret Brooks

CWF News

The CWF Executive Committee will meet January 9th at 6:00 pm with General Meeting to follow at 6:30pm.

The service project for January will be kitchen supplies for our church kitchen and office supplies.

- Paper plates
- Bowls
- Napkins
- 8 and 12 oz cups
- Sugar
- Sweet and unsweet tea
- Paper towels
- Dish washing detergent
- Cutlery
- Toilet paper
- Copier paper-all colors welcome



Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Christmas baskets and helped to deliver.

We have not received any suggestions for programming and would appreciate help with this. We are planning a combined CWF/CMF covered dish dinner on January 24th at 6:00pm. All are invited..

Thank you, Becky Hoke, CWF Pres.





They say that you can never return home. Over the Christmas holiday my daughter was here from college, and she had made plans to go and spend time with

neighbors from our home in the Champion's area. At one point, she had asked me to travel to the old neighborhood.

Before I realized it, I found that my stomach was in knots, and I was actually becoming short with Emily. As we began the hour-long drive, with each passing mile, I became increasingly agitated. Not necessarily with Emily, or the conversation we were having concerning old friends that she was getting updates on, but with "something."

It finally dawned on me that I was associating the old neighborhood with my illness. When I remember the old home, I don't necessarily remember the wonderful neighbors that we had (and they were the best – several times they took care of Emily and provided us with food), but instead, I see a place with four walls, a roof, closed windows, and darkness. It was in that house that I nearly died, experienced pain, and a loneliness that I can't even begin to describe. To me, the house represented a period in my life where I experienced the

deepest valley of darkness that I had ever encountered in my life. It was in that house that I had not just experienced physical pain, but emotional and spiritual as well. It was the place where I lived when New Covenant closed its doors, I was terminated from Memorial Hermann where I was a chaplain when I ran out of family medical leave, and it was the place where Emily said good bye and went off to college from. Instead of focusing on the residence as a place where God did some of God's greatest miracles in my life, I instead, focus on the layers of pain, my own identified failures, and the anger that I now harbor that is encapsulated within this house.

During a recent Sunday School class, I shared with the group that I simply couldn't explain why I still have times when I find it difficult to be silent and spend time with God. The bottom line, I not only have encapsulated the anger within the four walls of a house on Theall Road in Houston, but it also has taken up residency within my heart.

One of our members asked, "Why do you have so much anger?"

To this day, I can't seem to grasp why it is that instead of professing the amazing healing that God provided while living in that home, I continually allow me to revisit the loss, rather than the gain. Instead of living the miracle of healing in celebration, I instead focus on the anger surrounding the shadows of a life that once "was."

My life has been enriched because God used that location to shape me in ways that I could never imagine. The encounter with

Pastor's Column Cont.

the Creator has forever changed me. Not that my life was not complete, or what God wanted for me prior to my illness, it was however, not what it is today.

Living in a world where the identity of self is attached to career, family, and home, the Kingdom of God is only identified by one thing, faith.

No where does the Kingdom of God establish a criteria for service, but it does invoke the promise that God will never leave us, and that God, as the Psalmist penned, desires "goodness and mercy" to follow us all the days of our life.

As I shared my feelings with Emily, bless her heart, said, "Dad, you know, we don't have to go there today."

Another blessing.

I hope that one day that I can work through this area in my life. Instead of seeing a home on the Northwest side of Houston as the place where I lost everything, I should realize that it was at this Theall Road address that God performed the most amazing miracle in my life and revealed just how marvelous God is, and that God had a greater plan for me.

Stay in God's grip!



Pastor

Rev. G. Todd Williams

Cell: (713)922-6599

Email: gtoddwms@gmail.com

Current address is P.O. Box 1766

Texas City, TX 77592

February Serving Team

Deacon of the Month	Carrie Mahle
Diaconate	
Eric Oberholtzer	Seth Willis
Roy Miller	Carrie Mahle
Elder of the Month	Becky Hoke
Worship Leader	Margaret Brooks
Acolyte	Brandon Oberholtzer
Host	Seth Willis
Communion Prep	Carrie Mahle

Sunday, February 5

Elders at the Table	Herman Troutman Helen Troutman
Money Counters	Lanette Leining Anita Sharp

Sunday, February 12

Elders at the Table	Virginia Adair Anita Sharp
Money Counters	Becky Hoke Margaret Brooks

Sunday, February 19

Elders at the Table	Marsha Sweatt Margaret Brooks
Money Counters	Lanette Leining Herman Troutman

Sunday, February 26

Elders at the Table	Becky Hoke Rusty Thomasson
Money Counters	Becky Hoke Sandra Andoe



Coffee in the Narthex
Every Sunday
Morning
9:00 am-12:00 pm



January

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

<i>Elders meet Sundays at 9:00am</i>			
1	2	3 <i>Lillian Carter*</i>	4 7:00 pm Choir
8 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45 am Worship 12:00 pm <i>Congregational Meeting</i> <i>Sandy Enmon*</i>	9 6:00 pm CWF Exec. Mtg 6:30 pm CWF Meeting. <i>Harry Hartley*</i>	10 6:00 pm <i>Ministry Meetings</i> <i>Council Meeting</i>	11 7:00 pm Choir
15 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45 am Worship	16 6:30 <i>General Board</i> <i>Jean Ashcraft*</i>	17 <i>Tucker Andoe*</i> <i>Larissa Green*</i>	18 7:00 pm Choir
22 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45 am Worship <i>Caiden Green*</i> <i>Wayne & Leslie Henderson**</i>	23 <i>Ricky Garza*</i>	24 6:00 pm Combined CWF/CMF with covered dish supper	25 7:00 pm Choir
29 9:30 am Sunday School 10:45 am Worship 5:30 pm <i>5th Sunday Fest</i> <i>FCC, Pasadena</i>	30 <i>Martha Pettyjohn*</i>	31	<i>Birthday Anniversary *</i>

July 2012

Thu

Fri

Sat

<p>5</p> <p>7:00 pm Handbells <i>Rozella Hayes*</i></p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00 am Take down decorations Followed by Dutch Treat Lunch</p>
<p>12</p> <p>7:00 pm Handbells <i>Bill McCulloch*</i></p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p><i>Cody Stanley*</i></p>
<p>19</p> <p>7:00 pm Handbells</p>	<p>20</p> <p><i>Katie Mease*</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p><i>Anita Sharp*</i></p>
<p>26</p> <p>7:00 pm Handbells</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>ALL CHURCH RETREAT 9AM - 5PM Taylor Lake Christian Church in Seabrook</p>
<p>* *</p>		

From Your Moderator

Many thanks to all the people who made our Advent and Christmas events so spectacular. Our annual March to the Manger was especially memorable with Laney Gutierrez as the Baby Jesus.



The Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Memorial Garden and the exterior of the building were unusually beautiful this year with the added touches provided by Pastor Todd, Emily and Brad and Pastor Todd's Dad, Leon. We will assemble Saturday, Jan. 7th at 9:00 am to remove and store the decorations. Then go together for a Dutch Treat lunch.

As we ring in the new year we look forward with anticipation to see where God leads us as we continue to serve Him at FCC/TC. Watch for information on our Annual Planning Event as we gather to make plans for 2012. All members are especially encouraged to participate.

The Ministry of Finance has done an outstanding job on the budget and we hope you will be present for the Congregational Meeting on January 8 to vote on the budget.

I look forward to a year of hope and expectancy and know that amazing things will happen here in 2012 as we seek new ways to worship and grow together.

In His Service,
Virginia Adair, Moderator

You may contact Virginia at:

vadair@peoplepc.com

Giving Thanks....

To my First Family:

What an amazing Christmas we all just experienced. My life has been completely blessed, and you all are the reason for much of my thankfulness and joy. I am continually amazed at the thoughtfulness, genuine heart for ministry, and your generosity. I, along with our staff, would like to extend a huge THANK YOU! for the gifts provided to staff, the gestures of thankfulness for serving, and for helping not just during the busy time of Christmas, but every day.

I'm especially thankful for the hospitality extended to my family during their visit. They got the chance to experience first-hand what I have already learned, that First is a wonderful place!

Stay in God's grip!

Pastor Todd

First Christian Church Friends,

Thank you for allowing me to work with you this year. I appreciate each of you, and would like to thank you for your generous Christmas gift. I hope that everyone has a wonderful 2012 and I look forward to another great year together!

Thanks again,

Scott

Dear Church Family,

I am happy to serve you in the office and so appreciate the Christmas staff gift. Thank you for your generous thoughtfulness. I look forward to 2012 and another year with you all.

Blessings,

Margaret <>

Successful Giving Campaign

The Stewardship Campaign was a great success! We have received 25 pledges for a total of \$89,667. The family at First is absolutely the best. Many people worked to make this a success and we thank them all.

Pledges may be made at any time of the year, so if you feel the call, we will accept a pledge by note, letter or Pony Express! On January 8, we will have a congregation meeting after morning worship to approve our budget for 2012. There will be time for questions or comments. We hope you will plan to be there. We are proud of the plans that are in process for the coming year and are grateful for the giving that will make these plans become reality. We thank the members of the committee for their hard work: Sandra Andoe, Charlie Bowman, Margaret Brooks, Dr. Burt Hink, Becky Hoke and Lanette Leining.

The Ministry of Finance

ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP EMPHASIS
Giving
GROWING JOYFUL STEWARDS IN YOUR CONGREGATION



Saints Alive—Living Generously
—1 Corinthians 16:2 (CV)

Property Committee Update

The Property Committee reports that a new disposal was installed, the heating system boiler was replaced, and now we have heat throughout the entire building. The float for the Christmas Parade was a success, and the church facilities were totally transformed for the Christmas Season. Special thanks to Dolores Miller for updating our beautiful angel and the sanctuary decorations. Steve and Todd created the lovely fountain and seating area in the Narthex for the Coffee Hour. A big surprise was the donation of a decorated Christmas tree that somehow transformed the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve as one tree became three. Oscar Alemon arranged this special surprise with the help of Wal-Mart.

Upcoming projects:

- Repair of the van roof
- Replacement of double entrance doors on the South and East sides of the church
- Paint on the curb of the Loop 197 entrance with reflective paint
- Remodeling the youth wing
- A mail box to be placed on site

As it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village to be a church, and what a Village We Are!!! Thank you, The Ministry of Finance

PRAYER CONCERNS

Members

Frank & Betty Black	Maxine McDonald
Brenda Bonneau	David Mills
Maureen Brown	Eric Oberholtzer
Frank & MaryAnn Dillman	Stephanie Oberholtzer
Janet Dowler	Virginia Pelton
Betty Galloway	Don Rainey
Lloyd & Larissa Green	Jerry Salyer
Harry & Judy Hartley	Margo Sanville
Malissa Hartley	Marsha Sweatt
Rozella Hays	Wanda Vernon
Carrie & Jerry Mahle	Don Williams

Family & Friends

Bonnie Barbier	Friend of the Oberholtzers
Susan Biscanin	Friend of K. Brooks
Sarah Black	Sister-in-law of Frank Black
Karl Brooks	Husband of M. Brooks
Chad Bullock	Friend of T. Williams
Larry Casteel	Friend of L. Leining
Tatum Crowell	Great Gr. Son of Mary Woods
Bob Downey	Brother in Law of V. Adair
Charlie & Anita Golder	Friends of S. Willis
Camden Green	Fam. of L. Green
Jimmy Guyton	Cousin of Doug Hiser
Malissa Hartley	Fam. Of J. & H. Hartley
Eugenia His	Friend of J. Salyer
Don Jez	Family of V. Adair
Andrina Johnican	Nursery Attendant
George Knadler	Friend of Willis'
Lisa Lanham	Gr daughter of Andoes
Bob & Elaine Loughridge	Friends of FCC
Dale & Sue Lowder	Brother of V. Adair
Tobi Luevano	Friend of J. Salyer
Isabel Mach	Friend of V. Adair
Joseph & Bradley McCreery	Friend of FCC
James Muir	Friend of S. Ridgeway
Jo Anne Nessler	Friend of C. Bowman
Skip Oberholtzer	Brother of Steve O.
Kristi & David Painter	Daughter & Grandson of Bob & Elaine Loughridge
Velery Phillips	Friend of L. Leining
Sandy Ridgeway	Friend of FCC
Rachel & Trey Rigby	Gr daughter of V. Adair
Jimmy Schattel	Brother of B. Black
Jeanne Skelly	Aunt of C. Gutierrez
Virgel Smith	Fam. Of Jackie Smith
Garvin Speed	Bro in law of Bill Andoe
Charlene & Henry Stewart	Friends of S. Willis
Kim Willis	Daughter-in-law of S. & B. Willis
Docia Woytek	Friend of A. Laird

Christian Sympathy Extended to

- Family & Friends of Dr. Earl Bissex
(Retired Minister-CPA)
- Family & Friends of Horace Bradford
(Father of Alice Medcalf)
- Family & Friends of Christine Dozier
(Aunt of Sandra Andoe)
- Family & Friends of Betty McDaniel
(Mother of Chuck McDaniel)
- Family & Friends of Betty Cox Templeton
- Family & Friends of Mary Shannon Vickery
(Former Member)
- Family & Friends of Marvin Roehl, Jr.
(Son of Marvin Roehl, Sr.)
- Family & Friends of Wm. Grady
(Husband of Marjorie Grady)

Active Military Duty

Jason Cornell	South Korea
Michael Darby	Ft. Hood, TX
Enrique Garza	California
Kyle Mease	Ft. Bliss, TX
Charles Roe	Afghanistan
Matt Tanner	Afghanistan
Tavares Smith	Japan
Travis Troutman	Ft. Hood, TX
Corey Wynne	Arizona

Ministry of the People

December was certainly a busy month as we decorated our first float for the City of Texas City Christmas Parade, hosted a Christmas Vacation Bible School, hosted Advent Coffee fellowships each week and set up the Outreach Angel Tree.

Thank you to everyone who helped with donations of time, talents and finances for



each of these endeavors. The parade was a fun kick off to the holiday season with 17 people actually participating in the parade itself. We are already thinking of ideas for next year's entry!

Our VBS allowed us to reach out to some children who might not otherwise have associated Christmas with the "Reason for the Season". We had so

many people help in various ways and it was a rewarding experience. Several families received Christmas gifts as a result of our Angel Tree program and we extend our thanks to all who contributed those gifts.

It WAS a very Merry Christmas at First Christian Church!



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

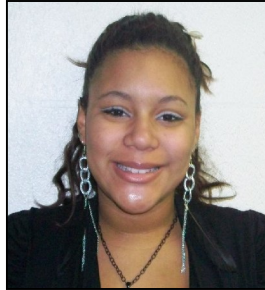


Visit us on the web!
www.firstchristiantc.org



First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
2400 21st Street North
Texas City, TX 77590
409/945.2241

Welcome Andrina & Chris



On Monday, 12/19/2011, the FCC Board approved the hiring of Andrina Joh-nican as our new nursery worker and her brother, Chris Garza, as assistant nursery worker.



We welcome them to our staff and hope that you will please stop by and welcome them. Personnel Committee, Anita Sharp, Chair

Holy Family



Music Notes



The Spirit of Joy Handbells performed "Prince of Peace" on December 4 and the sanctuary choir sang our Christmas cantata, "The Christmas Light", on December 11. Everyone did a fantastic job; thanks for all your hard work over the Christmas season!

Now is a great time to join choir and handbells, as we learn new anthems and have a shorter rehearsal schedule. :-)