

The Visitor

First Christian Church
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) • GREENSBORO, NC

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GREENSBORO, NC 27403-1715

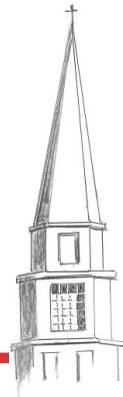
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The Visitor

A publication of

First Christian Church
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) • GREENSBORO, NC



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love. serve. hope. connect. fcc.

Opportunities at FCC

Coffee and book study? ✓ Casual conversation and fellowship? ✓
Educational speakers? ✓ Small group study and discussion? ✓
Choir? ✓ Ways to serve? ✓ Activities for kids? ✓ (Big kids and little kids?) ✓
Dinner and drinks? Yes, that too. ✓

As we head into fall, there are many ways to connect, worship, care, and serve. Take some time to review this list of opportunities (below and continued on page 4).

Agape
Women's
Group

Monthly gathering for women's fellowship, study, and support.

Care
Team

Volunteers who stand ready to meet needs in a variety of ways, in times of crisis but also when good things happen, too. Visits, meals, celebrations, offers to babysit, phone calls, cards, prayers, transportation...

Choir

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Speaker
Series

Lectures and thoughtful discussions. Occasional Sundays throughout the fall. Coffee and light breakfast snacks at 8:45; presentations begin at 9:00.

To know and love God, to nurture each other, and to reach out and welcome all people in the name of Jesus Christ.

love. serve. hope.
100 years!

**FIRST
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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Friends:

Several years ago, on a trip with my family to northern Minnesota, we stopped to visit a lighthouse perched high on a cliff along Lake Superior. The Split Rock lighthouse has stood for over a century, warning ships traveling through dark and icy waters of the treacherous rocks along the shore.



The lighthouse itself was impressive, but I was intrigued by the small house just next door, where the lighthouse keepers lived. In the days of oil lamps, these men and women and their families took on as the task of keeping the light shining, trimming the wick, refilling the oil, cleaning the lens. Given the lighthouse's remote setting far from the nearest town, this was far more than a job; it was a way of life.

I keep coming back to this image of a lighthouse, and the keepers who tend and care for it, as I think about our calling as a church community. We are keepers, of a sort—not of oil lamps and lenses, but of stories. For centuries now, the church has been keepers of the stories that tell of God's love for the world. This is one of the most significant tasks of the church: to be storykeepers. Other groups do good community service. Other groups have potluck dinners. Other groups care for each other well. But the church does all these things because we are keepers of the stories that remind us of the way of life God calls us to. In a world intent on war, we keep stories of peace. In the midst of debates about who belongs and who doesn't, we keep stories of welcome. In moments when storms rage and all seems despairing, we keep stories of hope.

And to be clear: we do not keep these stories for ourselves. We tend to them, holding them carefully, retelling them—trimming the wick, refilling the oil, cleaning the lens—so that they will shine like a beacon of light across dark and stormy waters. We keep them so that they can be shared: they show us how to live, and what God dreams for us. They help us navigate among the rocks.

This fall, we'll take a look at some of the stories the church keeps, and talk about why. Most will be familiar stories; maybe we'll hear them in a new way. Some will be less familiar, and maybe you'll discover a new favorite. Also in worship each week, storytellers from the congregation will share a story from their own life, about how God is at work, even here and now. (Got a story you'd like to tell? Let me know.) We are keepers of each other's stories as well.

Author Rob Bell, in the book we're talking about at Tuesday night's Table Topics, describes the Bible as a "ruthlessly hopeful" book. I believe that. And I believe that what the world needs is a ruthlessly hopeful group of storykeepers who will shine a little light on the way ahead.

Join us, won't you?
Lee



Musical Notes contributed by Woodson Faulkner

Hymn Story: Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Encouraged by the Welsh Calvinist Methodists to update their hymnal, Williams, the "Sweet Singer of Wales" produced about 800 hymns, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" being the first in 1745. This very personal hymn seeks the same care that God gave the Israelites in the wilderness: "Bread of heaven," the manna in the wilderness, "Open now the crystal fountain," water from the rock, "Let the fire and cloudy pillar," the pillar God used to guide them and protect them in the wilderness.

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" has been translated into 75 languages. It is so loved in Wales that it is considered an unofficial national anthem. It was first published by Williams in 1745, in Hallelujah, with five six-line stanzas. In 1771, Peter Williams translated stanzas 1, 3 and 5 into English and published them in his Hymns on Various Subjects, 1771. A year later, William Williams, or possibly his son, John Williams, translated another English version, using Peter Williams' first stanza, then translating stanzas 3 and 4, and adding a new stanza as verse 5. He published it as a leaflet with these words: "A favourite hymn sung by Lady Huntingdon's Young Collegians. Printed by the desire of many Christian friends. Lord, give it Thy blessing!" Most hymnals use the first three stanzas of this translation.

Many are the stories of this beautiful anthem giving people strength in time of adversity. Three women missionaries in China, with bandits outside their door, sang this as though nothing was wrong, receiving comfort and courage from their "Strong Deliverer." Imprisoned with only dry, hard bread and tea, they sang it as Paul and Silas, their spirits undaunted, fed by the "Bread of heaven." In the trenches of Flanders during World War I, it was sung so melodiously by the Welch soldiers that the German soldiers also took it up. Miners sang it on their way to the mines. It could be spontaneously sung at Welsh sporting events, and was sung at Princess Diana's funeral.

Hymn Tune: CWM RHONDDA

The hymn tune CWM RHONDDA, (pronounced koom rrhawn-tha) to which we sing "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah," was written by John Hughes in 1905 or 1907, for the annual singing festival, Baptist Cymnfa Gnau at Capel Rhondda, Pontypridd, Wales. It was printed in leaflets for that occasion.

Originally named RHONDDA for Rhondda Valley, a great mining valley in Wales, Hughes added CWM, or valley, when he found there was already a tune by that name. Although there is a story that this tune was written with chalk on a piece of tarpaulin, more likely it is his wife's recollection that he wrote it in the Salem chapel one Sunday morning.

Provide Dinner for the FCC Youth!

Sunday Night Youth is starting back up Sunday, Sept. 10, and we are in need of volunteers to prepare weekly meals for our youth and their leaders. This is a very simple way to serve and spend time with the children and youth at FCC! If you would like to receive more information or sign-up for a specific Sunday evening, please email Amanda Kerr.

Can you help with Children's Church? You will assist the leader—no preparation required, just a willingness to work with our children. Contact Amanda Kerr.



What's your story? contributed by Cliff Greaves

Some 20 of us gathered at Elizabeth's Pizza on N. Battleground for Table Talk recently. Nothing particularly remarkable about this gathering of the faithful, other than the fact that the ages of the participants ranged from 20 somethings to folks in their mid 70s. Every Thursday: conviviality with lots of love and good food shared in abundance! But there is more! We are a diverse group of all ages, talents, and life styles. Some are "retired," others are ordained ministers, while others are on the path to ordination. Then there are those who are young married couples. There is, also, a full time adult student working on an advanced degree aimed at a career change. Each is at a different place in their journey of faith, but all are working hard to build community based on love and trust with each other and God.

In spite of our age, lifestyle, gender, race, and length of relationship with each other (and FCC), there is an incredible bond that has developed as we have come to know each other in ways that really matter. The level of open, honest, loving, caring, nurturing, conversation that goes across the table, is intentional work resulting in a loving connection with each other, thus growing the depth of this community. It all happens without concern for age, race, lifestyle, or gender and it is so incredibly heartwarming!

Topics of conversation range from spiritual discussions, to issues with a recalcitrant employer, exciting new challenges and opportunities for folks, to the personal joys and sorrows in our lives. We have learned about each others wants, needs, desires, talents, passions, and more. Truly, we have come to know and appreciate each other in ways that are so significant and meaningful. This particular night was no different except that the conversation was enhanced with the excited anticipation of new life that will be introduced into the church through the birth of new babies to be born later this year, and early next year!

As I watched all this, participated in much of it, and listened, I said, out loud, to those sitting nearest me, "this is what it means to be church. This is the stuff that matters. Age not withstanding, we are truly connected with each other by a bond built on trust, love, and common purpose". Of course, what I mean by that is these relationships formed within that loving, diverse, incredibly different, talented, and amazing community of people exist because of the loving trust that exists between all. When you think about how long we have been meeting this way, and the fact that many of us did not know each other, beyond greeting one another on Sunday morning, this is just amazing!

The power of love, sharing a meal together, being honest with each other, and being accepted for who you are as a child of God, does amazing things. God brings people together for a reason; in this case it is to build a community of loving friends who know that they belong, and are loved by God because his love has been manifested to, and through, each other. We are all better people because we are beloved members of FCC who have been affirmed in this small group of God's children walking life's path together. What an amazing gift and blessing God has bestowed on us!

Each of us is a storykeeper! Send us your story... email info@fccgreensboro.org.



First Christian Church is a place where thoughtful people **think**. It is also a place where thoughtful people **do**. We take seriously Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors. It is our mission to know and love God, to nurture each other, and to reach out and welcome all people in the name of Jesus Christ.



RECENT ATTENDANCE

August 27: 93

September 3: 71

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please contact the church office if you would like a name added to or removed from the prayer list.

Angie Wethington	Chuck Jones	Billie Pierce	Jesse Little
Letha Gant	JoAnn Alley	Anne Early	Rita Saveriano
Joe & Ann Fry	Kenny Honeycutt	Tommy Guthrie	Phyllis Collins
Leroy Bymaster	Jim Saveriano	Lib Tilley	Bob Moates
Marie Reaves Grant	Roger Stanley	Betty Wilson	Ed Wagoner
Gary Yeager	Bill Rayle	Susan Ormond	Marian Perry
Bobbie Poston	David Hodgkin	Gary Weerts	

prayer

The Week of Compassion

Week of Compassion is the humanitarian aid and disaster relief ministry of our denomination, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It's got a slightly misleading name, because WOC does good work year round, not just one week. (The "Week" is a reference to the week in February when we highlight and raise money for this ministry.)

Week of Compassion supports ongoing relief efforts all over the world, working with community partners to provide the best resources possible. And in the face of huge natural disasters—like we're seeing in Texas—Week of Compassion stands ready to help. You can help by making a gift of any amount.

Visit weekofcompassion.org online; you can also send or bring your gift to church on Sunday (marked "Week of Compassion: Harvey") and we'll get it to the right place.

Reconciliation Offering

The 2017 Reconciliation Offering will be received in congregations on September 24 and October 1. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has a history dating from the 1960s of sharing our resources to address the racism of our society and the racism within our own church. We have called this process the Reconciliation Ministry. We receive this offering in the fall and use the funds throughout the year to give grants to the pro-reconciliation/anti-racism initiative to organize to dismantle systems and structures that perpetuate this sin of division within the Church.

The Special Offering (given in addition to our regular gifts and pledge) is used to fund our Church's mission imperative to become an pro-reconciling and anti-racist church utilizing experiential education, inclusive worship and intentional dialogue. Our efforts to promote healing, relationship and restoration in the whole family of God are enlivened by funds from this offering. Through it we are able to provide programs for leadership development, curriculum for dialogue and learning, and partnerships within the Church and our communities.

SUNDAYS AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

9 a.m. Small Group or Speaker Series
10 a.m. Worship
11 a.m. Fellowship and Coffee Hour
5 p.m. Dinner and Youth Groups

There are ways to *connect* every single day. We are serving, learning, and growing in a variety of ways.

Opportunities at FCC, continued from page 1

 Sunday Night Youth
K-12 youth groups every Sunday evening at 5:00.

 Sunday Small Group
Every Sunday morning. Coffee at 8:45; small group at 9:00. No preparation required! Each reading stands alone and is read together.

 Table Topics
Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Reading and discussion of Rob Bell's book *What is the Bible?* Short reading assignments posted on the web; each session begins with a recap. Come when you can!

 Table Talk
Thursdays at 7 p.m. Casual, informal conversation at a local restaurant or at someone's home. Check website for meeting locations.

 Vintage Bunch
Monthly gathering on the second Wednesday of each month. Primarily geared to the interests of folks who are 50-55+. Lunch and program. Generally 11:15 a.m.

There's more! Our Outreach Team keeps busy serving in our community. We participate in local events such as the CROP Walk. Men's and women's groups gather for coffee. Vintage Bunch folks get together to play cards. Volunteers help throughout the week. Folks prepare Sunday night's meal for youth. The ways to connect with FCC beyond Sunday mornings extend wide and deep. Our online calendar and events page will keep you up to date!

There are interest sheets at the Welcome Desk at church. You are invited to sign up to learn more about the many ways to get involved and encouraged to speak with Lee or Melissa. Send either one an email for help getting connected!

love. serve. hope.    *come. share. give.*



*Like a lighthouse on a rocky shore,
the stories of the church provide a way ahead:
navigation among the rocks,
a little light to see by in the dark.*

Story Keepers A worship series at First Christian Church

Join us as we explore the following stories:

September 10: God is doing a new thing.
Story: Abraham and Sarah Text: Genesis 12:1-9

September 17: God is always with us.
Story: Jacob dreams Text: Genesis 28:10-22

September 24: God makes a way where there is no way.
Story: Ezekiel and the dry bones Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14

October 1: God sends prophets to turn us around.
Story: Elijah Text: 1 Kings 17:1-17

October 8: To live well we love God and neighbor.
Story: Good Samaritan Text: Luke 10:35-37

October 15: Everybody counts.
Story: Lost and found (also: Prodigal Son) Text: Luke 15:1-10

October 22: Everybody's welcome.
Story: The Great Banquet Text: Luke 14:15-24

We'll also be sharing stories from you. Read a story from a church member on page 6! (You'll find details here on how to share *your* story.)

welcome.

You are invited to an informal gathering to learn more about First Christian Church, Sunday, September 24, at 5 p.m., at the home of our pastor, Lee Hull Moses, 221 N. Elam Ave. Over heavy hors d'oeuvres, you'll have a chance to get to know some other First Christian members and ask questions about the congregation. Share this invite with a friend!