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The Visitor

A publication of  **First Christian Church**
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) • GREENSBORO, NC

January 9, 2019



Do you like soup? Do you like football? (That's optional, really.) Do you think it's important to feed the hungry and raise money to fight hunger? The annual Souper Bowl of Caring will be Sunday, February 3, following worship at FCC.

This year's game plan is **BIG.**

With the help of our Connections, Outreach, and Property teams, the Neighborhood Youth Project is hosting this year's Souper Bowl of Caring. Youth and families from Congregational United Church of Christ will join us. There will be crafts and activities for all ages including BOWLing.

CAN we raise more money and collect more food than last year? In 2018, our Souper Bowl of Caring raised \$928. 256 cans of food were collected plus 152 other nonperishable food items.

We **CAN** have a big impact.

The soup lunch is free but donations of canned goods and money will be accepted and given to the One Step Further Food Pantry. It's a nationwide celebration of giving and serving around the time of the Super Bowl. Wear a jersey or your team's colors to church. (Your team isn't playing? That's okay! Dress for game day however you'd like.) **Join us immediately after worship February 3, for the Souper Bowl of Caring!**

Can you imagine?

We sometimes think that "imagination" means something escapist or illusory. Yet, imagination is not something unreal or fake. No, it is essential to God's hope for creation. Hear how the Apostle Paul put it: "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine..." (Ephesians 3:20-21).

God imagines a world where all are safe, all are loved, all are fed. Through gifts to Week of Compassion what we can imagine becomes ever more a reality for more and more people. We will collect a special offering for the Week of Compassion February 17-24. More info can be found at weekofcompassion.org.

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.

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

Rev. Lee Hull Moses, Senior Minister
Pastor's email address: pastor@fccgreensboro.org
Phone: 336-273-4725 Fax #: 336-273-7030
Website: fccgreensboro.org
Send newsletter submissions to info@fccgreensboro.org



A Note from Our Pastor



Dear church:

We still have several Sundays together, but this may be my last newsletter as your pastor. I'm not much for sentimental farewells, but I do love a good list, so in honor of our ten years together, here are ten things you've done that have made our decade together such a joy.

1. You laughed a lot. In worship, in meetings, over meals. You enjoy being together, which makes this church so much fun to be a part of.
2. You made decisions based on faith, not fear. Sometimes money was tight. Sometimes people got upset. But not once did I watch you back away from the direction you knew God was calling us.
3. You're committed to ministry with children and youth. We've had to reimagine what that looks like, but you've always made it a priority to teach and care for our kids.
4. You're committed to outreach. You are always looking outward from these walls to see how you can serve our community. And even when we were financially stretched, you've kept your commitment to send at least 10% of our income back out.
5. You take care of each other. You know that it's not just the pastor's job to check in on people. You go to the hospital and deliver meals. You pray for each other. You love each other well.
- 6.. You've stayed connected to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). You know that the church is stronger when we connect to other churches, and you've supported the Disciples Mission Fund, sent kids to camp, and paid attention to what's happening in the denomination. (Relatedly: maybe I'll get to see you at this summer's General Assembly?)
7. You made space for new leaders to learn. You welcomed interns and loved them into being capable, faithful ministers who will serve the church well.
8. You said, "Sure, we'll try that." Whether it was planting a garden, rearranging furniture, or changing up the order of worship, you've always been game to try something new.
9. You said, "You can just be a mom today." You took care of the Easter egg hunt so I could watch my kids find eggs. You locked up the building so I could get home in time for bedtime. You made sure I took my day off. (I presume, should your next minister be a father, that you'll encourage him to "just be a dad" sometimes as well.)
10. You said yes to leadership. Almost every year, I've fretted about who would fill one major leadership position or another. And every year, just the right person stepped up and said yes. That's never been more true than this year. I meant what I said at the leadership installation in worship last week: you're in good hands, church.

I can't imagine a better place to have spent the past ten years. I'm grateful for you, and for our time together. Thank you.

Lee



News, Events, and Church Notes

2018 Honor Gifts

At Christmastime, gifts were given by:
 Eleanor Bray in memory of Travis Bray
 Diane, Brian, and Barbara Gillespie in memory of Bert Gillespie
 Leah and Melissa Guthrie Loy in honor of Shannon Huth
 Bennie Hearne in memory of Lamar
 Dennis & Darilyn Knibb in memory of Dennis' parents Donald & Jane Knibb and in memory of Darilyn's father Bill Rayle
 Dean & Lora McPhail in memory of Chuck Jones
 W.E. Phillips in memory of Joe Fry

Christmas Eve altar flowers were given by Billie Pierce in memory of Raymond and Pauline Martin.

New Members!

Welcome to new members Brandon Hill and Bennie Hearne. Brandon joined on December 30; Bennie joined on January 6.

Bakers and helpers needed for the Corner Market

On Saturday, February 16, FCC will again host a bake sale at the Corner Market (at the corner of Elam Ave and Walker) to support the market's Green for Greens program, which doubles the SNAP benefits and provides hungry neighbors with access to fresh, local produce. Can you bake something to donate? Can you help at the sale that morning? It's a great way to get to know our neighbors. Talk to Darilyn Knibb if you can help. Volunteers are needed to set up, operate our table, and tear down. Lots of bakers are needed to supply goods to sell.

Pictured below

Everyone had a part in the December 23 Christmas pageant (pictured on the left). Middle and high school youth enjoyed s'mores at the end of their January 6 Neighborhood Youth Project gathering (pictured on the right).





Words of Thanks

Dear church, On behalf of all the church staff, let me say thank you for your generous Christmas love gift. It is an honor to work together and serve this congregation, and we are so grateful for your generosity. Thank you, Lee

Thank you, members of First Christian, for the generous Christmas bonus. It is an honor and a pleasure to be your music minister! In loving gratitude, Woody

FCC, what a great Christmas! Thank you for the gift at Christmastime. You continue to be supportive and generous in so many ways. Melissa

Thank you all so much for the gift you gave to me at Christmas. I really enjoy working with all of you, and I appreciate your kindness very much. Pam

From Salvage Garden

Thank you for the end-of-year contribution to our nonprofit. We have a partnership behind the scenes of sorts. The Salvage Garden business office is still in FCC's building. Some First Christian folks join us for worship on the second and fourth Saturdays (if you haven't experienced "sensory worship," join us sometime!) It is important for me to share that Salvage Garden families know they are welcome at FCC. Many churches say children with disabilities are welcome. A Salvage Garden parent said, "First Christian actually means it." Thank you, FCC, for your ongoing partnership and support.

From Bess Lamson

Thanks to all who have volunteered to serve as greeters. This is an important role that helps welcome all. If you are interested in being a greeter on a Sunday morning, please contact the office or speak with me, Bess Lamson.

Just Wondering: Questions and Answers from Retired Disciples Minister J.T. Moore

In the Prodigal son story (Luke 15:11-32), the son reasons to himself upon coming home to be treated like a 'hired servant,' not a son. Who is a hired servant?

In Jewish law of that day, a father was not free to leave his property as he desired. The law dictated that the elder son must get two-thirds and the younger one-third. (Dt. 21:17) It was, however, not unusual for a father to distribute his estate before he died if he wanted to retire. There is, though, a sense of heartlessness in the request that the young son asked for his part early because he sought a life elsewhere. Upon his return, following a 'wasted' life, he was going to ask that he be treated not as a son but as a hired hand. In the surroundings of that day, the 'ordinary' slave was in some sense a member of the family, but a hired servant was like a day laborer and could be dismissed very easily, certainly not a member of the family.



RECENT ATTENDANCE

December 23: 103

December 30: 73

January 3: 117

WE CHOOSE LOVE.

PRAYER CONCERNS Contact the church office if you would like a name added to or removed from the prayer list.

Angie Wethington
Ann Fry
Leroy Bymaster
Gary Yeager
JoAnn Alley

Roger Stanley
Betty Wilson
Phyllis Collins
Ed & Emo Wagoner
Robin Lund

David Hodgins
Steve Ball
Amanda Oliver
Bev & Dick Isaacson
Shannon Huth

Karen Watson
Barbara Moehring
Charlie Terrell
Shannon Lineback

LEADERSHIP At the December 23 Congregational Meeting, the following leaders were elected for 2019.

Chair of the Board:
John Flynt

Chair of the
Worship Team:
Dawn Steadman

Trustees:
Lora McPhail, Charles
Jones, Lewis Woodruff

Les Rose
Lewis Woodruff
Susan Cox
Meredith Cooper
Bill Lund

Vice Chair of the Board:
Emily Viverette

Chair of the
Faith Formation Team:
James Thomas

Elders:
Faith Manley
Robin Lund
Bill Inmon

James Thomas
Olivia Steadman
Kasey Bogan
Debbie Light
Brad Light

Treasurer:
Stan Ward

Chair of the
Property Team:
Sue Hulighan

Dean McPhail
George Manley
Cliff Greaves
Jim Tebow

Troy Desselles
Jamie Cannady
Leah Guthrie Loy
Larry Collins

Chair of the Elders:
Mike Wildman

Chair of the Stewardship
& Finance Team:
Spencer Smith

Mike Wildman
John Flynt
Spencer Smith
Eleanor Bray

Robertson Rcham
Jason Myers, Chair

Chair of the Trustees:
Charles Jones

Chair of the
Connections Team:
Darilyn Knibb

Chair of the
Personnel Team:
Baylee Smith

Deacons:
Nick Miller
MaryKate Holden
Crystal Flynt

*Questions about the
upcoming pastoral
transition can be directed
to Dawn Steadman,
transition team leader,
Baylee Smith, personnel
team leader, John Flynt,
board chair, or Emily
Viverette, vice chair.*

Chair of the
Outreach Team:
David and Lisa Barnette

Financial Secretaries:
Brad Light, Cindy
Boehling, Ken Garner

Patti McDonald
Helena Epstein
Madison Steadman
Emily Boerckel
Dona Norwood
Don Moehring

SUNDAYS AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

9 a.m. Small Groups
10 a.m. Worship
11 a.m. Fellowship and Coffee Hour
5:30 p.m. Youth Groups on the first and third Sundays

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Table Topics, Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m.
Choir Rehearsal, Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m.
Table Talk, Thursdays, 6:30 p.m.
Board Meeting, Sunday, January 20, 11:15 a.m.
Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sunday, January 20, 11:15 a.m.
Ladies' Coffee Group, Thursday, January 24, 9:30 a.m.
Craft Night, Friday, January 25
Vintage Bunch Kings & Queens, Monday, January 28, 9:30 a.m.
Connections Team Dinner and Planning Meeting,
Tuesday, January 29, 6:30 p.m., Jason's Deli
Souper Bowl of Caring, Sunday, February 3, 11:15 a.m.
Elders Meeting, Tuesday, February 12, 7:00 p.m.
Vintage Bunch, Wednesday, February 13, 11:30 a.m.
Corner Market, Saturday, February 16, 8:00 a.m.

Find the full calendar online at fccgreensboro.org/calendar

Children and Families Program

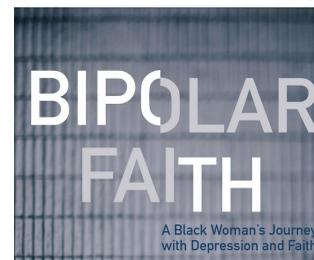
Our Sunday night program for children and families is thriving and growing... and we need your help! Volunteer roles include providing dinner (reimbursement is available), teaching a class for elementary school students, or simply being a back-up volunteer to help the teacher. We especially need volunteers who aren't parents of young children, so that the parents can participate in the concurrent parent program. Can you help on one of the following dates? Jan. 20, Feb. 3, Feb. 17, March 3, March 17, April 7, May 5, May 19. Let us know at info@fccgreensboro.org and we'll provide more details.



Good reading, good conversation, good company

Table Topics meets at the church at 7 p.m., every Tuesday. In January and February, we're reading *Bipolar Faith* by Monica Coleman. Pick up a copy and join us on Tuesday evenings.

Please note: The book contains sensitive material including descriptions of sexual assault.

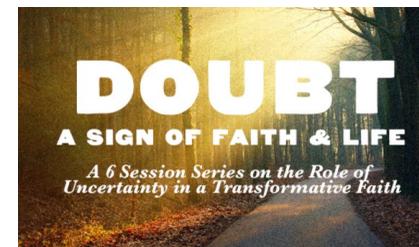


Sunday Morning Bible Study

This ongoing small group looks at the day's scripture reading with the help of commentaries and reflections. The readings will be printed and the group will read them together. Coffee is ready at 8:45; come settle in! This small group meets in the Friendship Classroom.

"Doubt: A Sign of Faith"

A new Sunday morning small group begins February 3. We will be looking at the role that uncertainty and doubt play in a vibrant life of faith. The group will be working through a 6-part video series from The Work of the People. The series is described here:



The Webster's definition of doubt is: "to be uncertain about something; be undecided in opinion or belief." Some synonyms for "doubt" include: apprehension, confusion, disbelief, lack of confidence, misgiving, mistrust, quandary, skepticism, suspicion, uncertainty, and reluctance. Do you recognize any of these in your life right now? If you do, you are in the right place as you begin this video series. Journey alongside Rachel Held Evans, Greg Boyd, Peter Rollins, Sarah Bessey, Chris Heuertz and Dwight Peterson who aren't afraid to doubt and are convinced that questions and uncertainty are a central element of a vibrant and transforming faith. Mystery is one of the most central ingredients of faith. Our questions don't lead us down a slippery slope where we lose our faith completely but rather to a deeper and more meaningful relationship with God that is built not on certainty and blind obedience but on honesty, vulnerability, and trust. The six videos are an excellent launching point for meaningful discussion with other honest friends who are wrestling with their own questions and doubts, too. Join in any Sunday beginning February 3. This small group will meet in the Balcony Classroom.

Thursday Night Table Talk Gatherings

On Thursday evenings, a group gathers at a local restaurant or pub or at someone's home for casual, informal conversation. There is not a planned topic for Thursdays. We show up: some of us eat dinner, some of us have a drink, some of us eat at home and stop by for conversation (or hugs), some of us bring our dog when we're outdoors. Table Talk serves a meal at a local family shelter once a month. The church calendar will list each week's restaurant/pub/home location.