



Fort Smith Disciple

May 23, 2018
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First Christian Church
3501 Rogers Avenue
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72903

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8:30am –4:30pm

Monday-Thursday

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Organist

Barbara Brown

Secretary

Pam Shelby

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Randy Alexander

Custodian

Patience Hudlow

Nursery Coordinator

Lesley Fleming

Nursery Attendant

Mission Statement

The mission of First Christian Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas is to lift up Jesus the Christ by:

- Enabling spiritual growth and deepened commitment, both individually and corporately;
- Developing a church family/ community that is accepting and encouraging;
- Serving our community and the world through spiritual, physical, and emotional support; and,
- Reaching out in His name to the unchurched in our community.

Excerpt from Message Delivered on the steps of the Arkansas Capitol Building, Little Rock, May 21, 2018, as part of the “Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival”

For God so loved the world, that God came into the world to show us how to love our neighbors as ourselves—All of our neighbors, but especially our neighbors who have been pushed to the margins.

Offended by the unsettling force of this inclusive love that proclaimed good news to the poor and liberation to the oppressed, afraid of this radical love that had the audacity to stand for liberty and justice for all, the privileged powers-that-be plotted against it, arrested it, and crucified it.

Three days later there were stories of a resurrection, a resurgence of this love. Because that’s the thing about this love. This love will not be defeated. There’s not enough nails in Jerusalem or bullets in Memphis or lies in Washington that can assassinate this love.

But the light of this love is such a threat to the systems that feed the darkness, the darkness will still try to find a way to overcome it.

However; yesterday, I went to church. I went to church, and I heard some good news from the second chapter of the book of Acts.

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they all came together in one place.”

“And there came a sound, like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house” where they had gathered. I believe the sound sounded something like: “FORWARD TOGETHER—NOT ONE STEP BACK!”

“Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” of a love that was so inclusive, so radical, so audacious, that despite their different languages, when they spoke out together, they were heard with a miraculous clarity by all.

“But others sneered and said, ‘They are filled with new wine.’”

They’re a bunch of sore losers, entitled whiners.

“But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: ‘Men of Judea and all who live [and work] in Jerusalem [and Little Rock and Washington], let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose,

“No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall proclaim prophetic justice,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.

Even upon [the poorest of the poor] both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall [proclaim good news to the poor and liberation to the oppressed]

And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth...

(continued on page 2)

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[In other words, God is saying: “Through **these** people, through a new unsettling force of inclusive love, I am going to change the world!”]

“Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs that were being done...”

The moral narrative changed. Walls came down. Chains were loosed. A blessed community was formed. Liberty and justice came. And it came for all. Not just to one race, one faith, and one nation. It came for every nation under heaven.

Truth came for all. Kindness came for all. Mercy came for all. Love came for all.

Into the world’s darkness, light came for all.

And darkness could not, cannot, and will not, ever overcome it!

Jarrett

Worship and Education Opportunities

Worship—May 27

“Renewing Our Discipleship Mission”
2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Elders

Carl Warrington and Nina Abernathy

Deacons

Stephanie Bailey (Foreman), Tim Fleming,
Bob Harris, Marilyn Maxey, Janet LaForce,
Dewayne Pryor, Tim Randolph

Prepare Communion

Rebecca Parke

Greeters

Jimmy Hudlow and Dewayne Pryor

Worship Leader

Carl Warrington

Open and Affirming Statement

First Christian Church strives to welcome all people without judgment and to provide a hospitality that affirms the diversity that is the image of God in creation. Each Sunday, when we gather around the Lord’s table and say “All are welcome,” we truly mean everyone.

When I became your pastor, I made the statement that I believe every church should be “open and affirming,” because any church that seeks to follow the teachings of Christ, that seeks to love as he loves, has no business being “closed and condemning.”

Of all of the human organizations on this fragmented planet, the church should be a place where all people are welcomed to join a community of grace, love and forgiveness. Without fear of being judged, condemned, or bullied, all people should feel welcomed to come as they are and honestly and openly confess their sinfulness and brokenness. They should then be encouraged to use the gifts God has given them to share the same grace they received with others.

Sadly, this is not the practice of many churches today. Therefore, the proposal is being made to add the following statement to our church’s constitution under “Article III: Membership”:

“First Christian Church is committed to being a people of grace and welcome to all God’s children though differing in race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, physical or mental ability, political stance or theological perspective. We affirm the faith, baptism and spiritual gifts of all Christians celebrating that all people are part of God’s good creation.” *Jarrett*

**The office will be closed
Monday, May 28 , in
observance of
Memorial Day.**

2018 Pentecost Special Offering May 27

Gifts to the Pentecost Offerings have allowed the Christian Church to reach more than 45,000 people for Christ and train 1,300 individuals to start more than 730 new churches. One-half of the gifts provided to the Pentecost Offerings stays in the region where the donor lives, and one-half goes to Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation to find the recruitment, assessment, training, and coaching of new church pastors, spouses and core team members. This year's offering theme is "Setting Tables in New Places".

Fellowship and Service Opportunities

Sunday School Teacher's Appreciation Breakfast

Sunday School teachers and your helpers are cordially invited to an appreciation breakfast on **Sunday morning, May 27**, to recognize and thank you for your service to our church. Please join us at **8:40 am** for breakfast and fellowship to start your day off right. Thank you so much for your dedication of time and talent! You are truly a gift!

Renewing Our Discipleship Mission

On Trinity Sunday during the weekend when we remember those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, we will also reflect on the sacrificial, self-giving nature of God that is revealed in the Holy Trinity.

God gave God's self through the Son. The Son gave himself back to the Father. And God once more gives God's self back through the Holy Spirit—This is what we can know about this mystery, this wonderful otherness that we call God. God is a self-giving God. God is a God who loves to give to others the very best that God has to offer, the gift of God's self.

This is an important concept for us to reaffirm, as we are called to emulate this holy persona by selflessly and sacrificially giving ourselves as disciples of Christ.

Jarrett

Getting' Down and Dirty with Jesus—A Missional VBS

Vacation Bible School is set for **Monday-Friday, June 4-8, from 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm**. The theme this year is *Getting Down and Dirty with Jesus*. This is a missional theme; therefore, children will participate in various mission projects during the week.

Along with nightly mission projects, children will participate in in-depth, interactive Bible lessons that will explore some of the ways that God gets down and dirty for us and the world through Christ, and they will be encouraged to model these ways in their daily living. The lessons will be reinforced each night with music, drama and games.

If you would like more information about this week or would like to volunteer, please contact Jimmy Hudlow at 479-259-3997.

Announcements

Church Calendar

Sunday, May 27

Pentecost Offering
 8:30 am Worship (Chapel)
 8:40 am Sunday School Teachers
 Breakfast
 9:00 am Mission Café
 9:30 am Sunday School
 10:45 am Worship (Sanctuary)

Monday, May 28

Memorial Day
 Office Closed

Tuesday, May 29

9:00 am Staff Meeting

Wednesday, May 30

7:00 pm Chancel Choir

Wedding Shower

Come help us celebrate the union of **Rachel Watson Lutz and Brandon Lutz** with a Wedding Shower on **Sunday, June 3, from 2:00 pm-4:00 pm** in the Parlor here at First Christian Church.

Disciple’s Women Fellowship Group 3 will host the shower. Rachel and Brandon are new members here at First Christian, and Rachel is the granddaughter of Regina and Mac Respass.

Please come and help us celebrate with our new married couple and family of First Christian. The couple is registered at Target and Walmart.

Memorial: We gratefully acknowledge the following gift, given as a thoughtful expression of sympathy and of care...
 In Memory of **Guye Willis** by Betty Marley

Mission Express O Café

The café opens at **9:00 am each Sunday** morning. All the proceeds support the Mission trips. Setup **begins at 8:30 am Sunday**. Come join us for fellowship, a cup of coffee and doughnuts.

Teacher Needed

Kindergarten through 6th grade Sunday school is in need of a new teacher. You would only be required to teach one Sunday a month. If you are interested, please contact Kira Moore at orbitalgyri@yahoo.com or 479-926-4955.

Thank you.

For the Record—May 20

Operating Receipts.....	\$ 6,484.35
To Date	17,030.70
Endowment.....	65.00
To Date	280.00
Pentecost Offering	340.00
Monthly Budgeted	
Needs.....	33,361.63

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