

**First Christian Church**  
3501 Rogers Avenue  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72903

**Office:** (479) 783-1139

**Office Hours:**  
8:30am-4:30pm  
Monday-Thursday

## Church Staff

**Rev. Dr. Jarrett Banks**

Senior Minister

252-414-9229

jarrett@fccdoc.org

**Dianna Jackson**

Director of Music Ministry

**Mary Beth Oliver**

Organist

**Barbara Brown**

Secretary

**Pam Shelby**

Financial Secretary

**Randy Alexander**

Custodian

**Patience Hudlow**

Nursery Coordinator

**Lesley Fleming**

Nursery Attendant

**Rev. Howard Marshall**

Pastor Emeritus

**Rev. Randy Jay**

Pastor Emeritus

## 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.

## Christmas Came in Straw

John Scott once wrote: “We are not to picture Jesus as a modern baby lying with nothing on but a diaper...but as a baby in ‘swaddling cloths,’ the long narrow strips of bandage wrapped round his limbs and body making free movement impossible...Is it not almost unbelievable that the Creator, on whose freedom and power we all depend, should allow himself to be bound, and to lie in helpless weakness in the straw?”

The true message of Christmas is that God was born into our world naked, defenseless, and vulnerable. How ironic then is our consumeristic perversion of it!

The Messiah, bound in a feeding troth—while December shopping malls exhibit a celebration of our capitalistic freedom to make and spend as much money as we desire.

The Savior of the World, born in a barn to peasants—while our homes and tables exhibit an extravagant excessiveness associated with royalty.

God, humbled, emptied and poured out—while Christians use Christmas to exert their power, control and authority, especially over others who worship differently.

Christmas challenges us to acknowledge that God’s ways are not our ways. While we perceive Christmas as an opportunity to get our own way, I believe Christmas shows us another way.

This is why I believe it is so important to attend and invite others to our worship services and activities during Advent and Christmas. For amid the clamor of consumerism and selfishness, in our worship we will hear a call to sacrifice and selflessness. Amid the noise of narcissism and pride, through our acts servitude we will sing carols of humility and sharing.

**Jarrett**

## *Worship and Education Opportunities*

### *December 15*

**"December Disappointment"**

**Rev. Dr. Jarrett Banks**

**Matthew 11:2-11**

**Elders**

Hardie Jefferies and Kristi Williamson

**Deacons**

Jimmy Hudlow (Foreman), Jesse Bailey, Terry Hales, Barbara Lynch, Nick Oliver, Greta Pryor, LaBeth Riggs, Steve Riggs

**Prepare Communion**

Greta Pryor

**Greeters**

Jesse Bailey, LaBeth Riggs, Steve Riggs

**Worship Leader**

Hardie Jefferies

*Elder on Call*

***Dan Marshall—479-806-3073***

### *Dianna's Notes*

#### **Music Schedule**

Children's Chimes and Jubilation Bells will meet in the Sanctuary at 9:10 am to rehearse.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>December 11</b> | Children's Choir at Creekmore Park   |
| <b>December 15</b> | Children's Chimes<br>Jubilations Bells<br>Randy Alexander and Jack Jackson II, Bell Duet |
| <b>December 22</b> | Prime Time Bells   |
| <b>December 24</b> | Disciples Bells<br>Becki Struble and Lula Hanson, Bell Duet                              |
| <b>December 29</b> | Bruce Birkhead, Solo   |
| <b>January 5</b>   | Kaycee Young and Robbie Wilson, Duet   |

### **Bill & Jette Lindsay Scholarship**

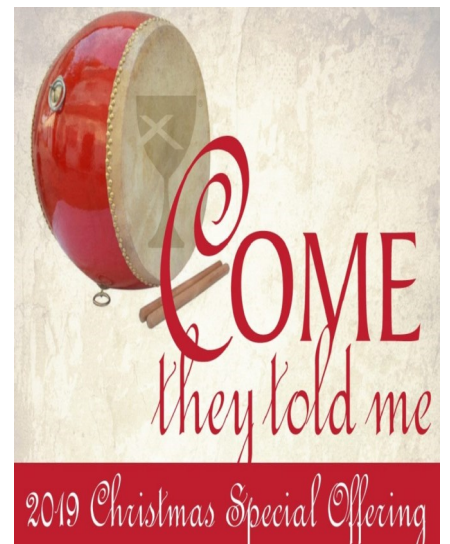
The trustees will offer scholarship money to any student that will be enrolled in college this coming spring semester. Contact the church office for a form or print the scholarship form attached to this email and return it to the church **by Sunday, December 18.**

### ***Christmas Special Offering December 15 and 22***

Our special gifts at Christmas support the ministries of our Great River Region. Our Region plays a supportive and direct nurture of our church at this time. For example, check out the FCC Youth Fellowship page on the Facebook! Our regional camps awaken the spiritual and mission directive in our youth. Most recently, they were the hands of Christ helping at the Earthbound Angels toy gifting project to over 200 children.

Another regional ministry will help us is in our upcoming ministerial search. We rely on our region to seek out vetted leaders for us to review to call to our pulpit.

Please give generously to this year's offering to support these and the many other ministries of the Great River Region.



## *Fellowship and Service Opportunities*

### **Christmas in the Park**

It's that time of year for 'Christmas in the Park'. We will provide hot chocolate and cookies **Wednesday, December 11**. Our own Tim and Lesley Fleming will be Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus! Santa will be handing out gloves and candy canes to the children. We are asking for donations of children's gloves and cookies. There will be a designated box in the hall outside the chapel for early worship and in the narthex for the 10:45 am worship. We will need the gloves by **Tuesday, December 10**. Also, if you could bake cookies, please contact Regina Respass or Connie Alexander. Thank you for your help!

**Community Outreach**

### **Volunteers Needed for Toy Giveaway**

Volunteers are needed to help at the Earthbound Angels Christmas Toy Giveaway that will be held in Disciples Hall on **December 14** from 8:00 am. to 12:30 pm. Call or text **Ginger Jefferies at 479-414-2466** or **Regina Respass at 479-651-1566** if you can help.

### **Angel Tree**

This year the Community Outreach committee will put up an Angel Tree. Our church has been so generous in giving and service to others. Please consider taking an Angel from the tree and giving a child a Merry Christmas. Last day to bring your presents to put under the tree will be **Sunday, December 16**.

### **Group 3 December Meeting**

Group 3 will meet in the parlor at 6:00 pm on **Tuesday, December 10**. Please bring substantial finger foods and enjoy the fellowship. Our mini-mission project for December will be to support the community outreach ministry by choosing an angel from the angel tree and or bringing gloves for the same ministry.

**Elizabeth Vaughn**

### **Friendship Class Party**

Friendship Class Christmas party will be **Saturday December 14, at 6:25 pm at the home of David & Judy Trent**. All former, present and future class members are invited. Please bring finger food and a gift for "Dirty Santa".

**Judy**

### **Youth Activities**

The youth fellowship has a will be very busy in the month of December. **December 14** the youth will be helping Earth bound Angels with their Christmas give-a-way. Please be at the church no later than 7:30 am each day.

Also, **December 14** is our annual Christmas Cookie bake-off and caroling at the nursing homes. We need volunteers to assist the youth in baking and packing cookies and help with caroling. So if you wish to have a day of fun with the youth, please pack the ingredients for your very best cookie recipe. You will be linked up with a youth to mix, bake, package and most of all fellowship. Hope to see you there.

After **December 15**, youth will break until **January 12**, with the exception of a possible lock-in at the church or maybe a trip to Dan and Zena's cabin (weather permitting). Details to follow.

**John**

## Announcements

### Church Calendar

#### Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday of Advent  
 Poinsettia Tree  
 Christmas Special Offering  
 8:30 am Worship (Chapel)  
 9:00 am Mission Café  
 9:30 am Sunday School  
 10:45 am Worship (Sanctuary)  
 1:30 pm Jackson Piano Recital  
 3:00 pm Christmas Sing-a-long (Disciples Hall)

#### Monday, December 16

6:30 pm Men's Supper

#### Tuesday, December 17

11:30 am Lunch Bunch  
 Cassie's Eggrolls, 2919 Towson Ave.

#### Wednesday, December 18

10:00 am Prime Time Bells  
 4:15 pm Children's Chimes  
 7:00 pm Chancel Choir

#### Thursday, December 19

11:00 am Pastoral Care Group

### New Service Schedule Effective 12/29

**No Early Worship Service**  
**9:00 am Sunday School**  
**10:00 am Worship Service (Sanctuary)**

**MEMORIALS:** We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts, given as a thoughtful expression of sympathy and of care...

- **Gerre Walker** by Nina Abernathy; Cherry Rains; David & Kristi Williamson
- **Eckel Rowland** by David & Kristi Williamson

### For the Record – December 8

Operating Receipts .....	\$ 4,443.00
To Date .....	12,595.55
Endowment .....	225.00
To Date .....	310.00
Monthly Budgeted	
Needs.....	29,118.21

### Concerns of the Community

- **Bill Crowder** is in ICU at Mercy Hospital.
- **Bob Harris**, Butterfield, 8420 Phoenix, #106, 72903

Please contact the church office with the name of any member of our congregation who has been sick or is hospitalized.

### Lectionary Readings

#### For the week of December 15

Isaiah 35:1-10	Psalm 146:5-10 or
Luke 1:46b-55	James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11	

### Mission Express O Café

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

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