



Fort Smith Disciple

September 9, 2020
Volume 58, Number 11

First Christian Church
3501 Rogers Avenue
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72903

Office: (479) 783-1139

Office Hours:
9:00am-3:00pm
Monday-Thursday

Church Staff

Rev. Dr. Ellis Robinson

Interim Pastor

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.

“By God’s Design”

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

John 3:16 NRSV

Sermon Focus: There are 23,145 verses of scripture in the Old Testament and 7,957 verses in the New Testament for a total of 31,102 sacred scriptures. Of all the verses of the Holy Bible John 3:16 is without a doubt the greatest of them all. John 3:16 has been called the bible in a nutshell. If you really want to know and understand the love of God, then memorize and embrace this great text.

Ellis Robinson

Last Week’s Answer and this Week’s Bible Question

When Solomon took over as King he had a great rebuilding project on his hands. He established districts and went to work rebuilding those districts. In district 5 he rebuilt several towns including a town that was located on a hill at a strategic place for travel and commerce. It overlooked a vast plain. That plain was the scene of many battles. There he kept his horses, some 450 of them, and his chariots, some 150 of them. The name of the town was Megiddo. The Hebrew name for Megiddo is Armageddon. One more battle there?

Next week: 1335? Good luck.

Danny Lynch

Regional Assembly

The Regional Assembly is **November 6-8**. Five of our church members are allowed to act in a formal capacity as representatives of our church. If you would like to be one of those representatives, call Barbara at the church office and get on the list. Be one of the first five.

Danny Lynch

Elder's Meeting Determinations In-Person Worship Service on September 20

The Elders met on August 30 to discuss our area's latest trends in new Covid-19 infections along with draft planning developed to maximize the health safety of our members to allow return of in-person worship services in the Sanctuary. The Elders adopted a set of guidelines along with a sanctuary seating distancing plan which, if closely followed, would meet the medical and scientific best practices to prevent community spread for in-person gathering.

Based upon the adoption of these two policies and that our area does not experience a significant change in its infection rates, the Elders have agreed that we can resume in-person worship services on Sunday, September 20. The Covid-19 Guidelines for Worship Services adopted by the Elders is presented in a companion article elsewhere in this newsletter. Please read and consider the guidelines carefully with the understanding that full adherence with them is expected of those who attend the in-person services and that they are needed to maximize the health safety of everyone present.

Although we hope that these guidelines are adequate, they are not one-size-fits-all. We realize that some of our members have higher risk conditions making them more vulnerable to infection by this virus. We encourage everyone to evaluate their individual circumstances in order to safeguard their health before returning to in-person worship services. This virus is serious and can produce life-changing circumstances. We understand and will fully support your decision to not attend if you feel it is unsafe for your personal health safety. We will continue to provide each Sunday's worship service on-line for you. The link to the worship service playlist is . <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLg9HSmKC7yCsVx5D6B6yNvWX24RnO9Irl>

The Elders will meet again on **September 13** to complete the final preparations for the September 20 service. If you have any questions related to the guidelines, please provide them to the church office by the end of office hours on Thursday, September 10 so that they may be considered at the Elders meeting. The health of our congregation is important to us all. Stay safe, continue to check on each other, and remember that we are connected by our love for each other and our Savior Jesus Christ. **Danny Lynch and Steve Parke**

Covid-19 Guidelines for Worship Services

ENTRY

- One Narthex entry door is to be kept in an open position on both east and west sides.
- Face masks must be on and properly worn before entry. Church will provide face mask if needed. **Masks which have an air release valve are not acceptable.**
- Temperature check will be taken for each individual upon arrival.
- Use the 6-foot distance floor markers as guides to maintain the appropriate separation from others.
- All attendees are encouraged to minimize gathering and to proceed into the Sanctuary.
- Hand sanitizer must be used by all individuals before entering Sanctuary.

SANCTUARY

- Face masks must be worn properly at all times.
- No nursery will be provided. Children must sit with parents or guardians.
- No seating allowed in pews, or portions of pews, identified as "restricted."
- A 6-foot social distance seating separation is expected to be honored by attendees from those with which they do not share a household setting or those with which they do not normally have daily contact or interaction. Any other seating arrangement requires the expressed mutual consent between all of the individuals comprising the group.
- No congregational singing.

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- Individuals must sign in with their name and contact number on pad provided for that purpose at their individual seating location. Sign-in pad to be left on pew for after-service collection by church staff. This information is necessary for contact tracing in the event an individual in attendance is later known to be positive for Covid-19, or determined to have been potentially been exposed to a positive Covid-19 setting.

EXITING

- One Narthex exit door is to be kept in an open position on both the east and west sides.
- No “gathering” at distances of less than 6-feet in Narthex following services. All attendees are encouraged to proceed to an outdoor location when weather allows.
- Place worn disposable masks in trash receptacles located by the exit doors. Do not leave worn reusable masks at the church for return usage.

Shower for Buffy Trent

Buffy Trent is getting married! Buffy is the daughter of Judy and David Trent. Buffy grew up in this church, and she was involved in the youth and music groups here at FCC. So, in honor of Buffy and Jesse, we will be hosting a Virtual Zoom Bridal Shower on **Sunday, September 27 at 2:00 pm**.

Buffy and Jesse are registered at Zola.com. If you click on this link below you can order and they will ship it for you: <https://www.zola.com/registry/buffyandjesse>

Rather than a gift, if you would like to send a card/gift card her address is:

Buffy Trent
325 Cherry Street, Apt. 204
Fort Collins, CO 80521

The idea is to try to have the gifts sent **before September 18**, so she can have them to open at the shower. Zola will send them to her when you order from the registry. Please RSVP to Dianna Jackson (host) by text, Facebook Event, or by email jacksondianna919@gmail.com. We will send instructions on Zoom Link to those who indicate that they want to participate in the shower. Let's celebrate!!

**Prayer Concerns**

- **Bruce Birkhead** passed away Sunday. Please keep the family in prayer. A Celebration of Bruce's Life will be held at **3:00 pm, Saturday, September 12, 2020 at Mount Salem Cemetery in the Mount Salem Community near Mount Magazine**. Picnic immediately following service at Mount Salem Cemetery. Don't forget your mask and lawn chair! His children and friends will organize a memorial concert for Bruce when conditions permit large gatherings. Memorial contributions may be made to First Christian Church (DOC), FS, a local public school music program, FSLT or KUAF. Services are entrusted to Edwards Funeral Home. To place online condolences, visit www.edwardsfuneralhome.com.
- **Bill Crowder** is recuperating from a fall that resulted in a broken shoulder and ankle and is in rehab at The Maples, 6456 Lynchs Prairie Cove, **Springdale, AR 72762**.
- **Gerhard Mensch** is convalescing at Subiaco for a few days.
- **Connie Alexander** lost her Aunt Iris Hightower on May 28. Service was on September 1.
- **The children of Regina Respass** lost their father, Mike Sanders, this week.
- **Lloyd Pearson**, former member of First Christian Church, is not expected to live. He is the father of Sue Pearson's children, Christy, Katrina, and Kimberly.
- **John Mundy** who is serving as a front line worker in the Virgin Islands ministering to Covid-19 patients.

Walk to End Alzheimer's

Dear Church Family,

The **Walk to End Alzheimer's** will be virtual this year and we will be hosting a walk for Tije Musset from our home. When first diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's in March 2017, Tije was stage 2-3 of 7. In the 3½ years since his diagnosis, he has progressed to 5½. Early onset Alzheimer's progresses much quicker than regular Alzheimer's, which is often found in older patients. If you would like to walk with us and show your support:

When: Saturday, September 19, 2020

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Where: 2915 South 33rd Street, Fort Smith

Length: 2 miles

If you would like to make a donation (100% tax deductible): Make check payable to **River Valley Alzheimer's Association**, write "**Team for Tije**" on the memo line. You can drop off the check at our home. (Donor forms are available in the church office.) Or go online to "**2020 Walk to End Alzheimer's – Arkansas River Valley**". Scroll down for the option of donating to a team (our team name is "**Team for Tije**").

We would love for you to join us for the walk and please **wear purple for Alzheimer's awareness**. We thank you all for your support!

Glenda Musset, Abby Musset and Katie Musset Whittaker

What's Been Going On

Thanks to all of you who have sent cards and made phone calls, checking on each other during the time off from church. Let's see what's been going on lately with some of our fellow disciples.

Steve & Rebecca Parke: Never ones that usually let the grass grow under their feet, the Parkes actually helped the grass to grow in their backyard by re-sodding the entire area, and they have installed a new deck! When not toiling outside, all other activities are directed toward granddaughters. Elizabeth attends pre-K at First Friends, a preschool at First Christian Church in Rogers, and Parker Grace is in second grade. Their mom, Laura, teaches virtual classes at Don Tyson School of Innovation. Rebecca has worked diligently for many months to make sure our homebound folks know they are important and valued. She has planned, cooked and delivered many meals to them, as well as regularly reaching out to check on their wellbeing. Thank you to Steve, who is working very diligently on the preparations for our return to church. He is spending much of his time, along with others, to ensure we will all **feel** safe and **be** safe when we open our doors in a few weeks.

Jack & Joy Jackson – Not surprisingly, Chef Jack continues to cook three meals a day; Joy says that if she ever has to cook, they will probably starve. They do watch TV some, and a few movies, but their favorite visuals are FaceTime with great-grandson, Avery, and ultrasound pictures of their new great-grandbaby, due in February 2021! Joy has been doing well after back surgery in October 2019 and says she is looking forward to cooler weather when she and Jack can enjoy a fire in their backyard, near a pavilion that matches their house. Have you seen their backyard, or their front yard? Both are incredible. There is no grass but plenty of rock, patios, sidewalks, and plants, flowers and shrubs with something blooming every season. Joy comments, "We have greened ourselves in!" The Jacksons say they are "old people, just living" and it sounds like they are doing a very good job of it.

Elder for September
Regina Respass—479-651-1566

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