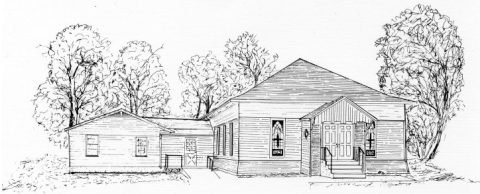




FIRST CHRISTIAN NEWS

December 2023

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.



MINISTER'S MESSAGE



UPCOMING events

- December 8 and 9
Live Nativity
- December 11
Women's Bible Study
Christmas Lunch 11:30
At home of Brenda Lambert
- December 24
Candlelight Service

In this Issue

- Upcoming Events 1
- Men's Devotional 2
- Financial Report 3
- Sermons and Texts 3
- Celebrations 4
- Women's Bible Study 5

To our Church Family,

To start, I would like to thank Ken and Brad for stepping in for me during the Thanksgiving holiday, so my family and I could go and spend time with family. I am so very grateful that we have people in our church that are willing to step in when asked. The family and I had a wonderful time in West Virginia, and I know Ginger really enjoyed being back to see the wonderful and colorful leaves, and the smells of nature in Fall.

As we all know the time is near. Many people around the world are busy with their preparations for their Christmas festivities and recently on our vacation, I was asked, "What does Christmas mean to you"? Well, it is simple for many of us to answer that question. Jesus! The celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior! But also, that question caused me to think deeper. By no means am I downplaying or toning down the significance and most important and central point of this beloved holiday. However, there is so much more for many others.

The Christmas holiday season is a time for family reunions, for family bonding, renewing friendships, etc. People worldwide celebrate the season in many different ways, following their beliefs and customs. Christmas is a time to celebrate. Foremost as mentioned before, it is the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

The central theme of **Christmas** is meant to bring a message of peace and hope, but this is now being overshadowed by the stress of preparing for Christmas to many people and families. Could this stress be blamed on the over-commercialism that has been attached to this most glorious celebration? Perhaps in part.

Parties have become a big part of Christmas celebrations. There are parties in the office, community, among friends and associates. It is almost impossible to turn away invitations, thus attending parties during the Christmas season has become more of a social obligation than a true observance for the reason for the season. While parties are alright, the meaning of the Christmas celebration has gotten lost in all the excitement.

Continued on next page

At times, I think that people have almost forgotten what Christmas really means, there are plenty of people who have a deep understanding of what Christmas is and should be. Below you will find just a few meanings that I feel is the answer to the question I was asked:

- It is remembering the special and wonderful gift given to all humanity.
- It is not about presents but the importance that someone took the time to think of you.
- It is to express hope, value, and love to others by investing in them as God does for each of us.
- It is a time to spend with family and to thank God, for another wonderful year, regardless of difficult times.
- It is a time to reflect on what is truly important in life.
- It is about showing gratitude and compassion, even when it is not reciprocated.
- It is a time to be happy, and better than we were yesterday.

To sum it all up. Christmas means not only remembering the birth of the Savior, Jesus Christ, but being and growing more into his image. These are the basic meanings of Christmas to me. What's yours?

Our church has seen and experienced many wonderful activities, gatherings, and opportunities this past year, and I look forward to seeing how we will be directed to serve and touch peoples lives for God this coming year. With that, I pray for each of you to have a safe, wonderful, and stress-free time as we move closer to the beautiful day of Christmas! From our family to yours, Merry Christmas!!!

In Christ, Pastor Dr. Doc Gardner and Family



MEN'S TOOLBOX DEVOTIONAL

Continual Growth - Job 31:5-8, 10

The ambition of God's man to become like Christ requires aggressively pursuing that one ambition. We need to constantly stretch the borders of our growth for the duration of our life on earth. Jesus didn't mince words or parse verbs on the whole topic of growth. He said either you are growing or you are dying — fruit or no fruit. There is no middle ground. That's why many men who email me are so incredibly down: they've chose to coast in their spiritual lives, and then they've found they are not coasting, but dying! They stopped abiding in the vine of Christ, disconnected from His process, and have no source of nourishment for their convictions. God's dream for God's man always involves personal growth and fruit. He is increasing; I am decreasing.

I challenge you to read Job's prayer. (Job 31:5-8, 10) Whoa, mama! That is what you call the open-kimono prayer. The dude is naked before God because he wants growth and spiritual integrity. It's a bring-it-on confession and prayer. Key words: "Let God weigh me." Are you willing to go there in your walk with Him? The place of full examination! If so, you will experience His dream and catch His vision for your life.

What will be the result if you keep moving your borders of growth? New insights — less selfish impulse — new character — less confusion — new conduct — less confusion — new spirit — less collateral damage — new growth — less disappointment — more impact — less regret — more motivation — less frustration.

No extra charge for the deep, gasping adrenaline rushes and unforgettable testimonies of God's power, which will also be yours. Read that list again. Go ahead, God says, that's what I want for you.

SERMONS AND TEXTS FOR DECEMBER

| Date | Sermon Title | Scripture |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|
| Dec. 3rd | The Promised Hope | Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:5 Luke 1:37 |
| Dec. 10th | The Joy Of Anticipation | Luke 2:8-15, Luke 2:16-20; Luke 1:39-56; Hebrews 12:2 |
| Dec. 17th | The Servant Love of Jesus | Luke 2:1-7 Philippians 2:5-11 |
| Dec. 24th | The Gift of Waiting | Revelation 1:7; Acts 1:9-11 Hebrews 9:28 |
| Dec. 31st | A New Creation | 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 Galatians 2:20; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:2 |



FINANCIAL REPORT - October

Income

Sunday Offerings: \$6,690.00
 Memorial Gift Fund: .00
 Special Offering:
 Building Fund Offering: 350.00
 Miscellaneous: 6.92

Expenses

Salaries: \$8,000.00
 Utilities: 312.48
 Supplies & Food: 182.89
 Insurance: 2,168.49
 Taxes: .00
 Maintenance: 205.00
 Miscellaneous: 350.00

Total Income:
\$7,046.92

Total Expenses:
\$11,218.86



Please keep the following in your prayers for strength, healing and comfort: Heather Carter, Jeannie Greenwald, Louis Cave, Daisy Nicodemus, Sandra Zimmerebner, Mary and Jerry Smith, Laura Latham, Janet Rippy, Sharon Olson, Clark and John Neill and family, Amy Davey.





12/05 Doc Gardner
12/19 Maya Jacques



None



The Community Thanksgiving Service was hosted by Calvary Chapel Honey Creek and was held at the First Baptist Church in Weston. We had a great time of worship and fellowship with other members of our community.



Thanks to Brad Chilton, Gloria Kautz, Andrew Chilton and Marilyn Chamberlin in leading songs for the service. Thanks to Brian Larsen for taking on the role of Governor William Bradford and reading the First Thanksgiving Proclamation.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

November 26th we celebrated Hanging of the Greens. The building has been decorated in preparation for our holiday season. Advent will begin on December 3 with the lighting of the first candle, the candle of hope.



Join Us
Women's Christmas Luncheon
Monday, December 11 at 11:30 am
Home of Brenda Lambert



First Christian Church of Weston

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 Facebook: First Christian Church,
 Weston, Texas
 Website: firstchristianweston.com

Service: Sundays 11 a.m.
 Adult Bible Class: 10:15 a.m.
 Children's Sunday School: during
 Service

Dr. Damon "Doc" Gardner, Pastor
 Cell: 469-417-8431
 Email: dagardnersr@gmail.com

Karen Chilton, Secretary
 Cell: 972-849-9084
 Email: kdchilton85@gmail.com

Newsletter Information Needed

To make the newsletter more personal,
 please send pictures or information on
 achievements, births, awards, or anything
 else of interest to Karen Chilton at
 kdchilton85@gmail.com.

LIVE NATIVITY

*A Celebration
of the birth of
Jesus Christ*



December 8 & 9, 2023
5:00 pm to 8:00 pm *Come & Go*
 In conjunction with Miracle on Chicken Street
Live animals and actors
Refreshments served

FREE to the Public
100 Chicken Street, Weston
Near FM 455 & FM 543 Intersection
Christmas Eve Service 6:00 pm

**First
Christian Church**
 (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
 WESTON

(972) 382-3347 | FCCWeston@outlook.com | www.firstchristianweston.com



MONTHLY PANTRY ITEM FOR DECEMBER - PASTA

We collected 36 pounds of peanut butter during the month of November. Thanks to those who donated. You are a blessing to others.

