



# FIRST CHRISTIAN NEWS

*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

- January 9  
Women's Bible Study 9:30  
Lunch 11:00 The Nook
- January 15  
Board Meeting 9:30
- February 12  
Valentine's Luncheon

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Happy New Year First Christian Church,

Well, it happened. It seems just like yesterday that it was January 2022. How time flies. As we are rounding into the New Year, I would like to say that I am so appreciative of all the hard work and time that so many have put in to make last year so memorable. As we begin to move into this new year, there has been something that I have been seeking God's direction for. What is His vision for our church this coming year? What should we, as His Ambassadors, focus on for our church body? What is our vision for 2023? Well, let me throw this out before we seek the focus for our church....

Research shows that 22% of the US population attends church regularly; 27% identify as agnostic, atheist, or have no interest in church; and 6% associate with a religion other than Christianity. That leaves 45% of the population that identifies as Christians but has no church. I believe many of us recognize that we live in a post-Christian culture. Most people in America do not have a church — even though most would consider themselves to be Christian. Many do not think going to church is important and some would even go as far as to say that going to church is not required to be a Christian. I know that those two comments are not the only reasons many of the 45% do not attend church. I hear quite often from visitors that the first impression of First Christian Church is that we're warm and welcoming. So why are they not returning? How can we make that change for that 45%? Well, I believe we have to take the next step, to be willing, as disciples, to establish relationships. Maybe we think we don't need another friend, but maybe we would find the best friend ever. The next person you meet could change your life, or you might help change theirs. We can all begin to prepare for the future today. We have a great harvest that is building up around Weston. More and more new housing developments are going up which allows for more opportunities to touch people's lives and be that church they are seeking. When members of the community walk into our building, they need to know that they are welcome — that everyone is welcome. It might be your first thought to connect with your friends at church (and expect them to connect with you). Instead, we need to begin seeking out the person we don't or barely know. I read a quote from Sam Walton, the founder of Walmart, once said. "I want the community to know we are a one-stop-shop. Whatever they need, they need to know they can come here." What if First Christian Church is the one-stop-shop for people in our community who want a better life, focused on a strong and growing Christian faith? I think everyone wants a better life. Let's be the place that helps people be better, and feel loved, and accepted. We have an exciting future before us as a church. Let's see where God takes us, and where he wants us to go... let us be ready and let us be that one-stop-shop church. Let us focus on reaching out to the new communities that are being developed around us and those individuals around us that we need to get to know. Are you ready? The vision, the over-arching goal – "Christ for a Better Life"!

In Christ and with much love,  
Pastor Dr. Doc Gardner Sr.

## MEN'S TOOLBOX DEVOTIONAL

### If Not Me, Who

**“For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it.” 2 Corinthians 10:8**



The Holy Spirit gives believers the exclusive authority to encourage other believers. No one else can provide this service to your brothers and sisters in Christ. In other words, a Christian is the Holy Spirit's only officially endorsed and sanctioned ambassador of encouragement to God's sons and daughters. He is looking for us to shoulder this responsibility personally, proudly, and powerfully to defeat discouragement and unfaithfulness in our spiritual family. By definition, unwholesome exchanges between believers involve tearing down versus building up. The Holy Spirit inside a believer helps to deliver targeted and helpful words that impact the heart of other believers to fit their situation. Spirit-filled encouragement says no to unhelpful or self-serving comments in order to say yes to directed support. This means listening well so we can encourage well. This means being okay with another believer's success and blessings in the midst of our own failures or tough times, knowing that God is working all things toward His purpose, good and bad. It means overcoming jealousy, envy, conflicts, and personality differences through the healing work and security the Holy Spirit provides. We are a walking, talking suit of clothes for the Holy Spirit. Who else can give Holy Spirit encouragement other than someone who is under the influence of the Holy Spirit? “Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit”

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY and LUNCHEON



On December 6, the ladies of the congregation enjoyed lunch together at the home of Kimberly Tisserand. Thanks, Kimberly, for hosting us!

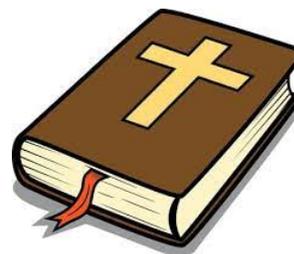
We will begin our next Women's Bible Study on Monday, January 9. We will have our study at the building beginning at 9:30. We will go to lunch then around 11:00 at The Nook. The decision was made to continue to have these events on the same day which will be the second Monday of each



month. Our next book will be “The Mothers and Daughters of the Bible Speak” by Shannon Bream. If you need a book, please see Brenda Lambert or Karen Chilton. We hope all our women members can make plans to attend. This is an open Bible study so invite your friends and neighbors.

**SERMONS AND TEXTS FOR JANUARY**

January 1	Testing and Persevering	James 1:2-18
January 8	Listening and Doing	James 1:19-27
January 15	Faith and Works	James 2:14-26
January 22	Speaking and Boasting	James 3:1-4:17
January 29	Waiting and Praying	James 5:7-18



**FINANCIAL REPORT - November**

**Income**

Sunday Offerings:	\$13,283.00
Memorial Gift Fund:	.00
Special Offering:	.00
Miscellaneous:	5.52

**Expenses**

Salaries:	\$4,000.00
Utilities:	89.60
Supplies & Food:	1,258.03
Insurance:	.00
Maintenance:	195.00

**Monthly Total Income:**

**\$13,288.52**

**Monthly Total Expenses:**

**\$5,542.63**

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 01/09 Tralyn Tadlock
- 01/12 Daniel Mitlyng
- 01/13 Scott Franklin
- 01/18 Danielle Chamberlin
- 01/23 Nancy Neill
- 01/26 Emma Dimock

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

Please keep the following in your prayers for strength, healing and comfort.

Heather Carter, Jeannie Greenwald, Louis Cave, Traylyn Tadlock, Daisy Nicodemus, Clark and Nancy Neill, Sandra Zimmerebner, Jerry and Mary Smith



**LIVE NATIVITY**

We had a great turnout for the Live Nativity. It was raining most of the night but still had many visitors come by as part of the Miracle on Chicken Street hayride. We are thankful for all the participants, all those that came by, and those that came inside to visit.



**SPECIAL SERVICE - DECEMBER 18**

We were blessed to hear from some of our members during this service.

Thank you to Maya Jacques, Brandon Tisserand, Holly Franklin and Brad Chilton for sharing your talents with us.



**CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service was a blessing to all.

Thanks to all those that participated this month in the candle lighting for Advent.



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of Weston

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Service: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.  
Children's Sunday School during  
Service

Doc Gardner, Pastor  
Cell: 469-417-8431  
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Karen Chilton, Secretary  
Cell: 972-849-9084  
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**Service Projects**

**Food Drive**

The Women's Bible Study group collected food items that were donated to LovePacs PCG. This organization provides food and snacks for children during the school breaks. Thanks to all who donated.



**Fall Clothing Drive**

The congregation was involved in bringing clothing to be donated to the Samaritan Inn. Seven large bags of clothing were delivered. Thanks to all who brought clothing.



**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