

THE LAWTON CHRISTIAN

The official newsletter of the First Christian Church of Lawton



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This Month at FCC

by Rev. Paul Appleby

Family of God at First Christian Church,

Every day we find new challenges and opportunities for ministry, and this month is no different. As to challenges, you are all aware of the extreme weather that we Oklahomans face each Spring. This year, the winds and storms have taken more than their usual toll on our beautiful building.

Our church sanctuary has suffered some roof damage and, as of the time of writing this, will need an unknown amount of work - possibly including replacement. Further, electrical storms caused our telephone power cabinet to fail necessitating replacement. Additionally, as those of you who were early to church on Sunday, April 24 may be aware, the main air conditioning compressors for our building have failed. Those compressors are, at this point, nearly thirty years old

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and have an average usable life of twelve years - so they have given above and beyond to us. Sadly, not only will repair be costly, but it may also take some time as our system is on the older side, and parts can be difficult to come by. Further, there is the chance that once the compressors are replaced and pressure to the system is fully restored that new problems may surface. The bottom line is that this Spring has brought a lot of additional expenses to our already stretched budget.

All that said, our challenges are not only monetary. With the possibility of a lengthy repair process for our air conditioning, this may create some logistical challenges for our Agape ministry, our choir, constituency groups, and our Sunday morning worship services (depending on the weather). In the event temperatures climb too high, we may need to look into meeting in another space. So, there are some of our more pressing immediate challenges.

Now, for opportunities. We may have an opportunity for additional closeness and togetherness in the coming weeks as we may need to move worship services out of our sanctuary. Fortunately, some renovation work has been done on our small chapel, located in the education wing. This room, in its current state, can seat around sixty people at capacity and will be much easier to cool with a temporary air conditioning unit than our sanctuary with its vaulted ceilings, lack of insulation, and large footprint. Worship in this space would grant us the opportunity to see one another in a new light and get back in touch with some of the older ways of worshiping (before the advent of PowerPoint and projection screens). That closeness may also work (at least I hope it will in the event we need to avail ourselves of the chapel) to foster a renewed sense of community and closeness within our community. As we face an almost assured budget overage, this also gives us the opportunity to practice good stewardship and maybe even some increased generosity in our giving as we look to help "right the ship" after once we become fully aware of the cost of repairs. Finally, we will have the opportunity to grow in our faith as we trust God to provide, as well as our ability to think creatively about our community and our future together as we weather this storm.

I trust that the recent happenings are no surprise to our God and look forward to seeing the amazing things God will do with, in, and through us in the coming month. Oh, there is one last opportunity I want to make you aware of. We are meeting weekly at the Buffalo Grove coffee shop at 12:00 PM for a devotional study related to our current worship series, Roll Down, Justice! In it we are using Stephen Mattson's Love & Mercy to

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gain a better understanding of the work of Biblical justice, how it is related to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and our ties to Biblical justice as resurrection people. The lessons are episodic, so it's alright to pop in and out as your schedule permits. I hope to see you there!

Blessings and Peace,

Rev. Appleby, Pastor
First Christian Church of Lawton



Worship Corner - May 2022

Throughout the month of May, we will continue our joyous celebration of Easter as we proclaim anew the message of Christ's triumph over the powers of death and destruction.

It is our hope that you find these services meaningful and memorable.

The Third Sunday of Easter (5/1): How Long: Renouncing Evil"

Elders: Lori Anderson and Becky Tannery

Worship Leader: Jane Springli

"How long will you forget me, Lord? Forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long will I be left to my own wits, agony filling my heart? Daily? How long will my enemy keep defeating me? Look at me! Answer me, Lord my God! Restore sight to my eyes! Otherwise, I'll sleep the sleep of death, and my enemy will say, "I won!" My foes will rejoice over my downfall. But I have trusted in your faithful love. My heart will rejoice in your salvation. Yes, I will sing to the Lord because the Lord has been good to me."

- Psalm 13 (CEB)

Over half of the liturgical songs of the Israelites were Psalms of Lament. Penned in a time of exile and persecution, these were poets trying to give voice to the pain of the people.

Today we lament the injustice of our time and yet, like the Psalms of Lament, we end in praise anyway for "God is good, all the time." We remember that even and especially in times of despair, through our baptism we are given the "freedom and power to resist evil in all its forms" as we "put our whole trust in God." How will we put these words into action to show hope to the world?

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The Fourth Sunday of Easter (5/8): “I Dream of a Church: Christ’s Representatives”

Elders: JoJo and David Aubrey

Worship Leader: Rick Van Horn

“Now when the Human One comes in his majesty and all his angels are with him, he will sit on his majestic throne. All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He will separate them from each other, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right side. But the goats he will put on his left. “Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’ “ - Matthew 25: 31-36 (CEB)

At our baptism, we promise to nurture others and are reminded that we are to “serve as Christ’s representatives in the world.” Today we ask the question, “do we as the church look and act like Jesus?” Our song of justice today invites us to dream of a church “where justice is flowing with hope and peace growing.”

What thoughts and behaviors do we need to shed in order to make room for hope and peace to grow in and through our lives and this church?

The Fifth Sunday of Easter (5/15): I Choose Love: Communities of Forgiveness

Elders: John Adair and JoJo Aubrey

Worship Leader: Sheila Fountain

“One of the criminals hanging next to Jesus insulted him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!” Responding, the other criminal spoke harshly to him, “Don’t you fear God, seeing that you’ve also been sentenced to die? We are rightly condemned, for we are receiving the appropriate sentence for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus replied, “I assure you that today you will be with me in paradise.” - Luke 23: 39-43

Each time someone is baptized, the whole church body gathered also makes vows. One of the things we promise is to be a community of love and forgiveness. Each day we must choose between letting the difficult things about life create resentment in us or allowing the work of forgiveness to make way for love. Our song of justice this week was written as a response to a modern-day act of forgiveness that reminds us of the power of Jesus’ forgiveness, even on the cross.

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The Sixth Sunday of Easter (5/22) – “God Has Work for Us to Do: Faithful Disciples”

Elders: Becky Tannery and John Adair

Worship Leader: Lori Anderson

You will be like a watered garden, like a spring of water that won't run dry. They will rebuild ancient ruins on your account; the foundations of generations past you will restore.

You will be called Mender of Broken Walls, Restorer of Livable Streets.

Isaiah 58: 11-12 (CEB)

Our featured scripture this week speaks of being a “well-watered garden like a spring of water that won't run dry.” Baptismal waters continue to feed the streams of justice as we allow the Holy Spirit to work within us every time we set our hands and feet to the work God has for us to do.

As we break bread today, we remember that as long as there are those who are hurting, hungry, excluded and oppressed, we are called to be faithful disciples, setting a table and inviting all to the feast.

The Seventh Sunday of Easter (5/29) – “The Day is Coming: We are One”

Elders: Lori Anderson and Sage Appleby

Worship Leader: John Adair

Now a large crowd spread their clothes on the road. Others cut palm branches off the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds in front of him and behind him shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. “Who is this?” they asked. The crowds answered, “It's the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Matthew 21: 8-11 (CEB)

The entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem was a vision of a coming day when power is displayed not with military might but through the solidarity of all people in the name of love and justice.

We pray this day for a time when we are one and we support one another on the road of life, not tear one another down because of our differences.

We will affirm our oneness with the whole human family this day.

Deacons for May

Patsy Bassel (Deacon Chair), Brian Birdwell (Team Captain), and Phyllis Bowman

Agape Ministry



Each Wednesday, our Agape Meal is served in our Fellowship Hall from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Following the dinner, Pastor Paul will lead a Bible Study for those who wish to stay and participate. The meal is free and will be served one meal per person. Since the beginning of 2022, a total of **1,033 meals** have been served, including **91 to children!** Thank you to all who help with this ministry!

May Menu:

- May 4:** Hot Links, baked beans, green beans
- May 11:** Chicken Sandwiches, tater tots, salad (ranch pouches)
- May 18:** Burritos (beef, bean, cheese), corn, tortilla chips
- May 25:** Breakfast for dinner

Our Dannie and Rafie Clothes Closet is open each Wednesday from 5:00 pm to 5:30 pm prior to the meal. For more information regarding the clothes closet, please call the church office or Denise Smith.

Our Outdoor Food Pantry on the south side of our church building is always in need of donations. You may either bring them to the church office or place them directly in the Outdoor Pantry. These donations go quickly! Useful non-perishable items include the following:

- Canned ravioli or spaghetti
- Other canned meats with easy-open tops
- Packages of ramen noodles
- Pop-Tarts
- Easy-open canned fruit or pudding
- Bread
- Cheese and Crackers
- Peanut butter
- Cereal
- Bottled Water

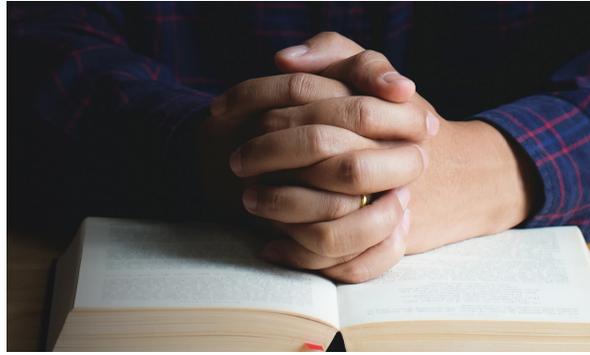
Donations of dog food and cat food are also requested. You may bring them to the church office. Thank you to all who have already donated items!



May 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>9:30 am Choir</p> <p>10:30 am In-person Worship</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p> <p>1 pm Staff Mtg</p> <p>1 pm CWF Bus.</p> <p>5:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Noon - Book Study at Buffalo Grove</p> <p>5 pm Clothes Closet Open</p> <p>5:30 pm Agape Meal and Study</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Noon - Anna Grp Girls Lunch Out Los Tres East</p> <p>5:30 pm Elders</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 Mother's Day</p> <p>9:30 am Choir</p> <p>10:30 am In-person Worship</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel Zoom</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Noon - Ruth Grp at Slim Chickens</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p> <p>1 pm Staff Mtg</p> <p>5:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Noon - Book Study at Buffalo Grove</p> <p>5 pm Clothes Closet Open</p> <p>5:30 pm Agape Meal and Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7 pm Anna Group meets in Parlor</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:30 am Choir</p> <p>10:30 am In-person Worship with Congregational Meeting to Follow</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p> <p>5:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>18</p> <p>5 pm Clothes Closet Open</p> <p>5:30 pm Agape Meal and Study</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6:30 pm Board Meeting</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8 am Hike in the Refuge</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:30 am Choir</p> <p>10:30 am In-person Worship</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p> <p>1 pm - Staff Mtg</p> <p>5:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Noon - Book Study at Buffalo Grove</p> <p>5 pm Clothes Closet Open</p> <p>5:30 pm Agape Meal and Study</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 am Choir</p> <p>10:30 am In-person Worship/ Pentecost Offering Collected</p>	<p>30 Memorial Day</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p> <p>1 pm Staff Mtg</p> <p>5:30 pm Choir</p>				



Please Pray for Those Who Have Lost Loved Ones

- Please pray for the Denning family following the death of Mary Denning's sister Lucille.

Other Prayer Concerns

- All of our armed forces and their families at home and abroad, including Samantha Mathews, Jimi Denning, Jazzy and Dillon Noland, Jack Oates, and Gavin Ledesma
- Those in Ukraine
- Bill Logan (hospitalized for pneumonia and cracked ribs)
- Bill Kindt (hospitalized with pneumonia; still healing from hip surgery)
- Don and Phyllis Henke (health)
- Ron and Beverly Honeycutt (health)
- Mel Cassady (as he adjusts to living at the VA Center)
- Bill Barker (health)
- Sherri Denning (undergoing testing for possible cancer reoccurrence)
- Jazzy, Dillon, and Baby Axel
- Delana Huggins (relief from neck pain)
- Marjorie Lutz (healing at home) and her daughter Melissa
- Darlene Miller (hospitalized for hip pain; in therapy; may have surgery)
- Ralph Piland (Connie Phillip's 96-year-old father who is healing from surgery)
- Heather Graham (Beverly and John Watson's daughter awaiting open heart surgery)
- Olesia (Sherri Denning's friend in Ukraine, who is preparing to fight for her country)
- Fran Herring (Brian Herring's grandmother who is undergoing chemo)
- Carmine (Becky Tannery's brother-in-law in rehab for a stroke)
- Robert (Amber Delger's father who is in memory care) and his wife Colleen
- Wendy Nelson (Amber Delger's friend who has a rare form of lung cancer and is awaiting surgery to remove a lung)
- John (Helen Venniro's uncle who is going through physical therapy following surgery for two broken knees)
- Bob Brooks (father of Beverly Watson's older children who is on Hospice)

Graduates' Names Requested



We are so excited that our very own Evan Aubrey will be graduating from high school this year!

If you know of any other graduates (relatives, church members), please let us know as soon as possible so that we may honor them also. It would be great if you could send us a picture and some information about your graduate.

Spreading the Light of Christ



Elder John Adair takes the light from the Paschal Candle to light the candles on the communion table. (Photo by Denise Smith)

Sharing a Word for Humanity



Rev. Appleby leads a prayer during the April 24th worship service. (Photo by Denise Smith)

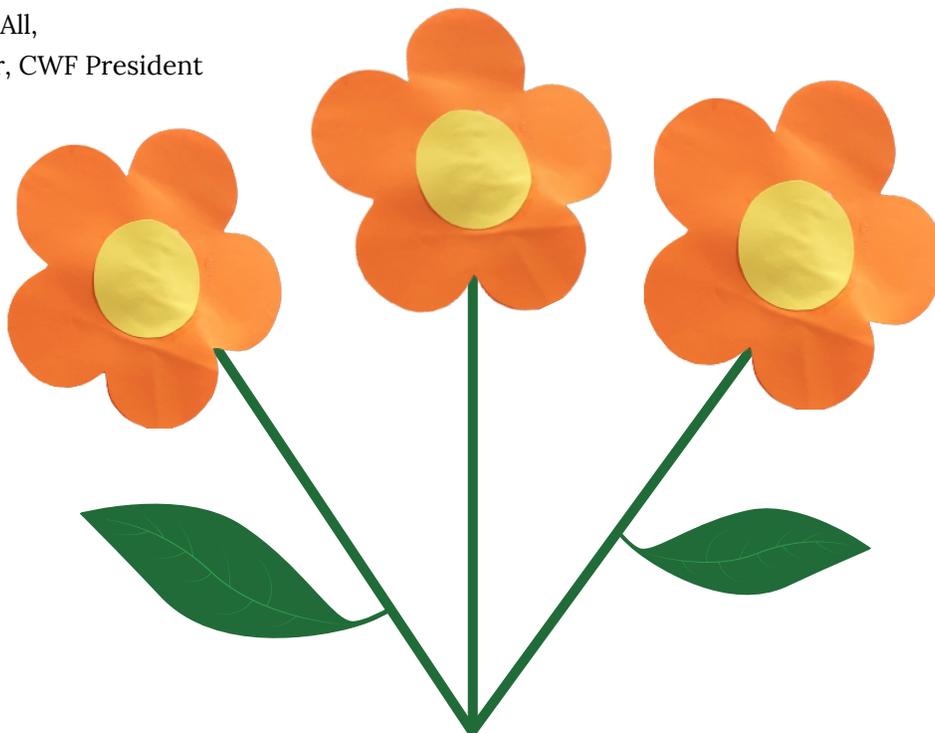
Christian Women's Fellowship Honoring Women With "Flowers of Love" Fundraiser

Dear Church Family:

We all have or have had significant women in our lives who have nurtured us, taught us, mentored us, supported our growth and development, loved us and encouraged us to be more thoughtful, kind, loving, motivated, and more. Christian Women's Fellowship (CWF) is hosting an event to honor these important women. During the next few weeks you may choose to show your love by donating to CWF in support of our church and community service projects. We have made flowers which will display the names of the women you wish to honor, and these flowers will be placed in our garden of LOVE. You may put several names on one flower or one name per flower - your choice. If you choose to donate by check, please make the check out to First Christian Church and put "CWF" in the memo line. If you are giving a cash donation to CWF in the offering plate, please mark the envelope CWF. You may drop by the office and give cash or check to Piper or drop your gift in the offering plate the next two Sundays, May 8th and 15th. All donations are appreciated. Please be sure to write the names or email the names to Piper or myself so we can put the honoree names on the flowers. (We also have forms in the Narthex for your convenience on which to write the honoree names and place in the offering plate.)

If you have any questions, please contact Piper in the church office at 580-355-2437 or office@fcclawton.org

With Love to All,
Kathy Cooper, CWF President



Happy Birthday!



5/2 Justin Bailey
 5/9 Bill Logan
 5/12 Mel Cassidy
 5/17 Erika DeBusk
 5/17 Helen Vennero
 5/19 Raylee Manos
 5/20 Kathy Cooper
 5/20 Jasmine Garcia
 5/24 Aimee Davis-Matheson
 5/24 Deanna Deville
 5/29 Andrew Shepherd
 5/30 Taylor Kennedy

Happy Anniversary



5/5 Vicky and Vickie Flores
 5/15 Jason and Julie Davis
 5/16 Bill and Darlene Ramsey

If you have a birthday or anniversary that we have left out of the newsletter, please inform the church office.

Pentecost Special Offering



We will be collecting the Pentecost Offering Sunday May 29th and Sunday June 5th during worship. Each year, half of these gifts go to our own region to support local new church development. The other half goes to New Church Ministry, which trains, equips, assists, and multiplies new church leaders across the United States and Canada through programs such as coaching, New Church Hacks, and Water the Plants. For more information, please go to disciplesmissionfund.org

Church Staff and Contact Information

Pastor- Rev. Paul Appleby/pastor@fcclawton.org

Administrative Assistant - Piper Saville/office@fcclawton.org

Director of Music - David C. Anderson/davidtunespianos@gmail.com

Facilities Manager - Konrad Delger

Sound Technician - Brian Herring

Media Technicians - Evan Aubrey and John Bowman

Nursery - Beverly Watson

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(Please be sure to send your emails to the church office at office@fcclawton.org.

We no longer use fccadmin@sbcglobal.net)



First Christian Church

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