

THE LAWTON CHRISTIAN

The official newsletter of the First Christian Church of Lawton



IN THIS ISSUE:

- **GOD BE WITH YOU TILL WE MEET AGAIN**
- **EMERGE: TO NEW LIFE AND NEW POSSIBILITIES**
- **CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES**
- **MAY CALENDAR**
- **BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**
- **JOYS AND CONCERNS**
- **AGAPE/OUTREACH MINISTRY**
- **NEW MEMBERS**
- **BOOK SIGNING**
- **THANK YOU**
- **APRIL BY THE NUMBERS**
- **FAREWELL LUNCHEON FOR PAUL**
- **CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS**
- **PENTECOST OFFERING**
- **CHURCH STAFF & CONTACT INFORMATION**

God be with you till we meet again.

Greetings, family of God. In December of last year during our congregational meeting I shared with you that the time would come this year when our shared ministry would come to an end. After months of discernment and conversation, that time has now come. It has been an absolute joy to serve as your pastor for the past three and a half years. Together we have preached the gospel, affirmed the dignity and humanity of all God's children, fed the hungry, clothed the poor, visited the sick, and weathered a global pandemic- not to mention remodeled much of our beloved church.

These have been some of my most enjoyable years in ministry, and so it is bittersweet to be making this announcement. That said, the road we have been walking together has reached a fork. In the coming months, First Christian will continue to explore new options and opportunities for its ministry in the future. I trust the direction of the Spirit and the capable hands and voices of your elected leaders, particularly your executive committee, will provide the prayerful guidance you need. My last Sunday as pastor of the First Christian Church of Lawton will be May 21, 2023. There will be a moment to recognize our time together in ministry, and the Rev. Pamela Holt, our Regional Minister, will be there to say a few words.

Continued on page 2

At the close of the service a reception and celebration will follow in our church fellowship hall. I would love to see you there. Following my departure, I will be moving on from pastoral ministry for a season as I continue to discern the ways in which Christ is calling me to practice my faith in the future.

Thank you all, once again, for the love and support you have shown to Sage and me. Thank you to our capable and dependable staff: Piper, Konrad, David, Brian and Bev. Thank you to all our lay leaders. And thank you, members of the First Christian Church family, for all of your love, prayers, and support. It has truly been a pleasure to serve you.

Blessings and Peace,



Rev. Paul Appleby

Emergence: to new life and new possibilities

Our Eastertide series, which began on Sunday, April 16, is in full swing. Together we are celebrating the power of spiritual, emotional, and physical transformation as we learn to creatively embrace the changes God invites us to throughout our lives and our life together. Below, you will find message titles, Scriptures, songs, and a brief description of our upcoming services.

The Fifth Sunday of Eastertide (5/7)- Unwrap: Waking Up

This Sunday, we will visit once again with Jesus's friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany. In the opening of the tomb of Lazarus, in the unwrapping of his funeral clothes, the community had to face their unknowing – and perhaps disbelief – and trust that the resurrection Jesus had facilitated was real. The range of emotions was vast. As the butterfly's cozy environment cracks further open still, it is the effort of the process of emerging that makes change possible – waking up, rolling away the stone, unwrapping what will be.

Scripture: John 11:1-44

Songs: "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"; "Death Shall Be No More"; "Because He Lives"

Elders: David Aubrey and Lori Anderson

Worship Leader: Rick Van Horn

The Sixth Sunday of Eastertide (5/14)- Unfold: Claiming New Possibilities

This Sunday, Deacon Joseph Vanpool will lead our service as we continue to utilize the butterfly as a metaphor for Christian life. Once out of the cocoon, the new butterfly has much to do to prepare for flight. Wings are not yet ready. Small and undernourished, they long for expansion – to move beyond this awkward in-between-ness. As we consider our own metamorphosis, we remember how Jesus renamed "Simon" as "Peter" – a description of "the rock" upon which the church would be built. Are we willing to accept that God's

Continued on page 3

possibilities may come in ways we never imagined, perhaps expanding our notion of who we are in this world?

Scripture: Matthew 16:13-20

Songs: “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”; “Who?”; “Cornerstone”

Special Guests: Deacon Joseph Vanpool; Rachel Briggs

Elders: John Adair and JoJo Aubrey

Worship Leader: Kathy Cooper

The Seventh Sunday of Eastertide (5/21)- Let Go: Leaving Behind What We Don't Need

This Sunday, we will be saying “Goodbye.” to our pastor, Rev. Paul Appleby, and celebrating the potential that is to be found in the new chapter of ministry opening before us. Stretching to the fullness of new potential, the butterfly begins to sense the calling to new heights. Expansion of wings, however, means something profound – it cannot ever go back into the cocoon. Not even if it wanted to. And so it is time to leave it behind. The Israelites that left Egypt were aching for freedom and yet when faced with the disorientation of all that was new and familiar, many began crying to go back. Letting go of the past requires deep trust in the God who has promised to be with us always.

Scripture: Exodus 16

Songs: “Faith Begins by Letting Go”; “Holy Manna”; “Take My Life and Let It Be”

Special Guest: Rev. Pamela Holt, Regional Minister

Special Event: Reception to Celebrate Rev. Appleby's Ministry Among Us

Elders: Becky Tannery and John Adair

Worship Leader: Sheila Fountain

The Festival of Pentecost (5/28)- Journey: The Places We Will Go

Deacon Amber Delger will lead us as we gather together to celebrate the outpouring of Spirit upon the church. Oh, the colors, the beauty, the unabashed and exuberant expression of all that we are together! This celebration is like none other – brought to its fullest embodiment as we emerge and dare new heights! In the emerging of the church in the book of Acts, a series of events in the life of Peter leads him to the understanding that God shows no partiality, and all are welcome in this journey of new life in Christ. Upon this rock, the Spirit builds a church that offers hope to the hopeless, strength for the weary, and new life to those who think theirs is over. Upon these things, this church will continue this mission to a world that so desperately needs a people who know the power of transformation!

Scriptures: Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:34-36

Songs: “Spirit of God”; “Fly On, Sweet Heavenly Dove”; “Ours the Journey”

Special Guest: Deacon Amber Delger

Elders: Lori Anderson and David Aubrey

Worship Leader: John Adair

Deacons for May: Patsy Bassel, Brian Birdwell, and Deanna Deville

Congratulations Graduates!



Peyton Davis is the daughter of Jason and Julie Davis and granddaughter of Nancy and Ralph Davis. She is graduating from Cache High School and will be attending the University of Oklahoma in the fall. Peyton plans to study Broadcast Journalism and Political Science while at OU.

During her time in high school Peyton was Student Body President and she was also her school's mascot. Additionally she was a member of Band, FCCLA, Partner's Club and BETA Club. Here at FCC, she helped with Vacation Bible School.

Outside of school Peyton is involved in dance and pageants, where she is currently Miss Tulsa State Fair's Teen.



Allie Albert is graduating from Elgin High School. She is the daughter of Mike and Beverly Albert and the granddaughter of Rick and Joan Van Horn.

During her high school years, she was a cheerleader, on the Elgin dance and color guard team, and in the FFA program showing goats. She was also on the volleyball team. Here at FCC, she helped with Vacation Bible School.

Allie is taking courses at Great Plains Technology Center for EMT and Phlebotomy, and she hopes to pursue a career in the medical field.



Micah White is the grandson of Jane and Tom Springli. Micah will graduate from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and will pursue his goal of becoming a Federal Law Enforcement Officer.

Micah lives in Burlington with his mother, Rita Springli. They are all extremely proud of Micah and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

Graduates will be recognized during the worship service on May 14th.



May 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<p>1</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p> <p>1 pm CWF Business Mtg.</p>	<p>3</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>6 pm Choir</p>	<p>4</p> <p>5:30 pm Elders Meeting</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Noon - Just Games With Friends</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9 am Weight Watchers</p>
<p>7</p> <p>10:30 am Worship</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>1 pm Ruth Group at Atlanta Bread</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p>	<p>10</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>6 pm Choir</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7 pm Anna Group Meets in Parlor</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14 Mothers Day and Graduation Sunday</p> <p>10:30 am Worship/ Graduates Recognized</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p>	<p>17</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>6 pm Choir</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:30 pm Board Meeting</p>	<p>19</p> <p>5 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9 am Weight Watchers</p>
<p>21 Paul's Last Sunday</p> <p>10:30 am Worship/ Pentecost Offering</p> <p>Farewell Lunch for Paul after Worship</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>23</p> <p>11:30 am - Girls Lunch Out at Silver Spoon</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p>	<p>24</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>6 pm Choir</p>	<p>25</p> <p>6:30 pm - Patsy Bassel Book Signing at the Leslie Powell Gallery</p>	<p>26</p> <p>5 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>27</p> <p>9 am Weight Watchers</p>
<p>28 Pentecost</p> <p>10:30 am Worship/ Pentecost Offering</p>	<p>29 Memorial Day</p> <p>Monday Morning Minute on FCC YouTube Channel</p> <p>6 pm Boy Scouts</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Noon - Taco Tuesday at Julio's Mexican Restaurant</p>	<p>31</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>6 pm Choir</p>			

May Birthdays



- 5/2 Justin Bailey
- 5/12 Mel Cassady
- 5/17 Erika DeBusk
- 5/20 Kathy Cooper
- 5/24 Aimee Davis-Matheson
- 5/24 Deanna Deville

May Anniversaries



- 5/5 Vicky and Vickie Flores
- 5/15 Jason and Julie Davis
- 5/16 Bill and Darlene Ramsey
- 5/23 Mark and Nicole Wernette

Joys and Concerns Thank you for Praying!

We praise God and rejoice with the following:

- Joe Bailey shares that his grandson Nehemiah, who has been on our prayer list, is doing okay. Thank you for your prayers!
- Elder Becky Tannery reports that she visited Phyllis Henke and noted good progress when she watched Phyllis do her therapy. She and Dick brought Phyllis to Easter services, and what a joy it was to have her with us again!
- David Pratt is now working full time!
- Kerrie and Adahjean Oates and Amber Delger are now recovered from covid!
- Connie Phillips says that her recent doctor's appointment revealed everything is healing well.
- Joe Bailey and Betty Aliff have tested negative for covid.

These appreciate your ongoing prayers:

- Kerrie Oates
- Melanie (Joe Bailey's daughter)

These with ongoing health concerns and their families appreciate your continued prayers:

- Aaron (Ursula Asuncion's son)
- Anna Herbert
- Axel, Jazzy, and Dillon Noland
- Baby Mila (friend of Ann Werner)
- Beverly Honeycutt
- Blaise Bailey (Joe Bailey's granddaughter)
- Cindy Davis
- Connie Phillips
- Darlene Miller
- Fran Herring (Brian Herring's grandmother)
- Lori Anderson
- Mark Durham (Beverly Watson's brother)
- Mel Cassady
- Michelle Henke (friend of Joe Bailey's granddaughter)
- Pratt Family
- Rev. Wayne Ashlock (former FCC pastor)
- Ronnie Bagwell (friend of Glenda Brown)
- Sherri Denning

Agape/Outreach Ministry



The Agape meal program has supplied **1,188 meals** so far this year. We have also supported approximately **425 additional meals/snacks** from the outdoor panty. The clothes closet has been extremely busy lately, and the ladies have been doing a wonderful job. Hilde has been providing support for furry friends with dog and cat food. She still needs help with getting these. As you all may know we have been operating off donations that were directly given to support the feeding ministry. However, as with all budget issues, we are getting very low on funds to support this program. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Konrad Delger

May Wednesday Agape Meal Menu (served at 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall)

May 5 - Grilled Cheese, potato salad, cole slaw, watermelon

May 12 - Hot dogs, baked beans, chips, cake

May 19 - Roast chicken, Brussel sprouts, broasted potatoes

May 26 - Egg Rolls, rice, vegetables

Books donations requested for the First Christian Little Library in the Fellowship Hall

Joseph Vanpool says the First Christian Little Library in our Fellowship Hall can use more books! If you have some you would be willing to donate, they would be appreciated.

Our Dannie and Rafie Clothes Closet is open each Wednesday from 5:00 pm to 5:30 pm prior to the meal. The closet is in need of **men's jeans, shorts, and t-shirts (any size)**. For more information regarding the clothes closet or if you have clothing donations, 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 (please mark out the UPC codes). 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

New Members



Joseph Vanpool joined First Christian Church in March. He is a retired Hospice CNA. He enjoys karaoke, all things Star Trek, cribbage, road trips, volunteering, cooking, and writing.



Paula Clouse joined First Christian Church in April. She is retired, and she enjoys reading, beadwork, RV camping, and crafts.

Book Signing

Patsy Bassel will have a book signing and reading from "House in Love Country," her recently published book of poems, at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 25 at the Leslie Powell Gallery, 620 SW D Ave.

Thank You

Thank you to all who showered me with kind words, cards, gifts, gift cards and flowers during Administrative Professionals week. I was amazed and so appreciative of your outpouring of love!
Piper Saville

April by the Numbers

April Tithes and Offerings (General Fund)	\$ 8,923.45
April Expenses to Date for General Fund	\$ 19,422.28
Difference	\$ -10,498.83
Balance Transfers for April from Special to General	\$ 11,500.00

April Average Sunday In-Person Worship Attendance was **48**.

To date in 2023, **1188 meals** were served at the Wednesday Agape Meals (**107** were served to children), and **425 meals** were served through our Outdoor Food Pantry. The Clothes Closet served approximately **80 people** during April.

Farewell Luncheon for Paul

There will be a Farewell Luncheon for Paul on Sunday, May 21st following the Worship Service. The luncheon is a catered event (everything from set up to clean up). If you would like to contribute to the luncheon cost please make your donation either to the Church Office (Piper Saville) or place it in the offering plate. Mark your contribution "Luncheon". (If you write a check, please make the check out to "First Christian Church" and put "Luncheon" in the memo line.)

Come join us in fellowship as we wish Paul a fond farewell and best wishes with his future endeavors

Christian Women's Fellowship/ OK Disciples Women News

CWF will be presenting a gift to Paul on May 21st for his support of our ministry throughout his tenure at FCC.

The Mother's Day Garden of Remembrance has nearly 100 beautiful flowers ready to decorate the sanctuary through May.

Graduates will be receiving gifts from CWF.

Group luncheon will be at The Silver Spoon at 11:30 on Tuesday, May 23rd. The Ruth Group will meet on May 8th at 1:00 pm at Atlanta Bread. The Anna Group will meet May 11th at 7:00 pm in the Parlor.

Jane Springli
CWF President

Pentecost Offering

Your gifts to the 2023 Pentecost Offering, which will be received this year on **Sundays, May 21 and 28**, help ensure our movement continues to embody the Disciples of Christ vision: to be and to share the Good News, witnessing, loving and serving from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

Half of your gift supports the local new church movement through your region's ministry. The other half supports New Church Ministry efforts across the United States and Canada to equip, train, and empower new leaders.

So, thank you for participating in the new thing God is still doing – just as in the beginning.

Church Staff and Contact Information

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

Office Manager - Piper Saville/office@fcclawton.org

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

Facilities Manager - Konrad Delger

Sound Technician - Brian Herring

Nursery - Beverly Watson

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First Christian Church

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Lawton, OK 73501-4592

The Lawton Christian is published monthly by the First Christian Church, 701 SW D Ave., Lawton, OK (Pub. No. 904-100). **PERIODICALS.** Postage paid at Lawton, OK. Postmaster: Send change of address to 701 SW D. Ave, Lawton, OK 73501-4592.

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