



Christian Challenger

Vol. 64

April 5, 2017

No. 7



This year we moved our annual Easter Egg Hunt to right after church. We want everybody to enjoy this rite of spring. First, CMF is serving up hot dogs in Fellowship Hall. Then we head outside to cheer on the children as they hunt for eggs and treats.

Holy Week Celebrates Who We Are

Holy Week is the most important week in the Church year! It is a time when we celebrate in a special way the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We remember his actions, reflect on his messages, and recommit to living as his disciples in the world today. During Holy Week we celebrate the core mystery of our Christian faith: we ritualize Jesus' transition from life to death to risen life, and our own participation in that timeless mystery.

It is so easy this time of year to celebrate these days as a historical commemoration. But we are doing far more than recalling historical facts. What Jesus did for us has

consequences for all people at all times. His life, death, and resurrection happened to him, but they also happen to all of us who claim to be his followers. These days, then, are a reminder and celebration of who we ourselves are and what our own lives are about.

As we celebrate the mystery of Jesus' passing, we actually celebrate the same passing over in our own lives. Jesus' self-sacrifice opened the way for us to share in new life. But this does require our own cooperation in God's divine plan of salvation. We must pass over our lives into God's hands and imitate the self-giving of God's Son. This is the way to life. "It is the Passover of the Lord."

Celebrate Holy Week

Palm Sunday, April 9

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|--|
| 8:40am | Chapel | Worship Service |
| 9:30am | | Sunday School |
| 10:15am | Sanctuary | Palm Processional Rehearsal |
| 10:45am | Sanctuary | Worship Service & Children's Palm Processional |
| 12:00pm | Fellowship Hall & Grounds | All-Church Hot Dog Lunch & Easter Egg Hunt |
| 3:30pm | Chapel | Last Pastor's Class with prayer service |

Maundy Thursday, April 13

- | | | |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 6:30pm | Fellowship Hall | Dinner |
| 7:00pm | Sanctuary | Worship Service |
| 8:00pm | Chapel | 24-Hour Prayer Vigil Begins |

Good Friday, April 14

- | | | |
|--------|--------|---------------------------|
| 8:00pm | Chapel | 24-Hour Prayer Vigil Ends |
|--------|--------|---------------------------|

Easter Sunday, April 16

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 8:40am | Chapel | Worship Service |
| 9:30am | | Sunday School |
| 10:45am | Sanctuary | Worship Service |
| NO Sunday Evening Activities | | |



Across Dave's Desk . .

by Senior Minister Dr. David B. Hartman, Jr.

We All Have a Jerusalem



Giotto, *Entry Into Jerusalem*, 1304

In the fall and winter of 2011, a lot of football fans were caught up in “Tebowmania”—a kind of spiritual giddiness over Denver Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow. Though he had won a Heisman trophy and led the University of Florida to two national championships, Tebow’s limitations as an NFL-quality passer were very much in evidence. Then, in the season of 2011, following a 1-4 start, the Broncos promoted him to starter, and he engineered one miraculous win after another.

Even more than his athletic prowess, Tebow was acclaimed for his faith and witness. The child of missionaries, he honored Christ in every word and work. His public professions of faith subjected him to ridicule by the secularists, but for many of us he could do no wrong. It dawned on my grown kids how much I admired Tebow when I started touting him to my college-age daughter Caitlin as worthy son-in-law material. When he started winning game after game, usually as the result of some jaw-dropping comeback, it almost seemed as he had been anointed by the hand of God. As the Lord said, “I will honor those who honor me” [1 Samuel 2.30]. One day, I was having lunch after church with my three adult children, Eric, Jon, and Caitlin, and my then-three year old daughter Emma. That Sunday, I had talked about Tebow’s faith during my sermon. For some reason, the topic of my life insurance came up at lunch—how much it was, who the beneficiaries were. Sensing some unease, I hastened to reassure my four children that my life insurance would be equally divided among the four great loves of my life, to which my oldest son replied, “Just to clarify, Dad—does that mean ¼ to Emma, ¼ to Caitlin, ¼ to the church, and ¼ to Tim Tebow?”

That year, the miraculous run ended when the Broncos lost in the playoffs. In the off-season the Broncos signed the great Peyton Manning as their new quarterback, and Tebow was put on the trading block. A lot of us thought he would go to the Jacksonville Jaguars. He was beloved in Florida, he would be near his parents’ home, and he would be cherished by the front office in ways he never really had been in Denver. Instead, he was traded to the New York Jets, which at the time was the most

dysfunctional team in the NFL. Despite the name, the New York Jets are actually based in New Jersey and play in a stadium complex called the Meadowlands. Persistent rumors suggest Jimmy Hoffa is buried beneath the 50 yard line. I thought trading Tebow to the Jets was a smarmy thing for Denver to do, until I heard that he had been given a choice—he could go home to Jacksonville, where he was already beloved; or he could go to New Jersey, home of Tony Soprano. Tebow, astonishingly, chose the Jets.

Ross Douthat, a thoughtful columnist for *The New York Times*, pointed out that Jonah was sent to Nineveh, and Paul was sent to Rome. If Tim Tebow was called by God to go play for the Jets, it was simply the latest manifestation of something God has always done—sent his most faithful, devoted servants to distant, hostile places, where they would be both needed and unwelcome. Which is why Jesus went to Jerusalem.

When he began his saving work by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus was very popular. Scholars call that time “the Galilean spring.” He healed the sick, cast out demons, fed thousands, and was followed by throngs of people. He could have stayed in Galilee forever, basking in the adoration of the crowds, but that was not where his destiny lay. Instead, he went to the holy city of Jerusalem, which had killed the prophets of God, exchanging the Galilean spring for the cold and murderous Judean winter. He went there because that was where God wanted him. When he rode into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey, Jesus was fulfilling a Biblical prophecy about the arrival of the long-promised Messiah, the triumphant king of the Jews [Zechariah 9.9-17]. Many disciples had followed from Galilee; others were there to greet him as he rode into Jerusalem. His enemies were waiting, too.

Much occurred in the week that followed. The first crowd Jesus encountered shouted, “Hosanna, save us!” Five days later, a different crowd shouted, “Crucify him!” From great acclaim as the Messiah to an agonizing and humiliating death, Jesus was speedily divested of all that he possessed: his popularity, his following, his clothes, his life. On the cross, he cried out the lament of the 22nd Psalm: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

But just as his triumphal ride into Jerusalem was not the end of his story, neither was his death on the cross. As we proclaim, our Lord rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, that where he is we may be also. But between the Palm Sunday of his procession and the Easter Sunday of his resurrection there many trials and sorrows. So it will be for all of us called in his name. We don’t get to go from Palm Sunday to Easter without passing through our own version of Good Friday. But remember—wherever we go in life, whether in joy or in sorrow, we follow where Jesus led. There is no place we can go where the Lord Jesus has not gone before.

Dave

Prayer: Loving God, give us the grace to go where you send us, and sanctify our trials there. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

This Sunday:

8:40 & 10:45 Services:

“Jesus’ Entry into Jerusalem”

Matthew 21:1-11

Rev. Renee Hoke

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

On Palm Sunday a video crew from Crane West will be with us recording images for a commercial about FCC.

The **Challenger** is now biweekly, so NO Challenger next week!

Welcome New Member! It was a joy to welcome Lynette Gill into our fellowship by transfer of membership from First United Methodist Church of Henrietta, TX, on Sunday, March 26th. Lynette began attending FCC at the invitation of Sherri Sutton & Glenda Tate to attend a Bible study. She worked at MSU prior to retirement in the School of Nursing, the Office of the President, and the Kinesiology Department. Lynette and her husband, Paul, reside at 2511 Elmwood N Circle, 76308, 704-4727. Welcome, Lynette!

Another kind of Easter basket: the Easter Offering! Your gift to the Easter Offering helps bring life, love and learning through the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and will be received on Sundays, April 9th & 16th. Among those ministries, the **National Benevolent Association** calls people together for health and social service projects from feeding the hungry to confronting mental health issues. **The Disciples Church Extension Fund** loans help **Disciples** build, remodel, repair, improve and relocate buildings to house ministry. **The Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries** and the **North American/Pacific/Asian Disciples** provides connection and conversation for their communities. **The Council on Christian Unity** participates in ecumenical events. Please support these and many other general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Christian Women's Fellowship:

The April CWF Luncheon will be Monday, April 10th, at 11:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. The program will be Installation of Officers by Dr. David Hartman. The devotional will be given by Patt Giddings and the service offering will go to Common Grounds Recovery Ministries. Reservations are not required and guests are welcome. Cost is \$5.00 per person. The CWF Board will meet at 10:30 am in Room 310 prior to the luncheon.

Group Meetings will be as follows:

Group 1 will meet on Monday, April 17th, at 1:30 pm at Melody Jennings' home, 1553 Singleton.

Group 2 will meet on Wednesday, April 19th, at 12:00 noon in Room 405.

Group 3 will meet on Monday, April 24th, at 2:00 pm in Room 405.

April Meetings: will be as follows:

Monday, April 10th:

Education at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

Tuesday, April 11th:

Property at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

World Outreach at 7:00 pm, Library

Tuesday, April 18th:

Prayer Team for Persecuted Church at 5:00 pm, Rm 310

Membership at 5:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Stewardship at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

Worship at 7:00 pm, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, April 25th:

Executive Council at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

If you will need childcare, please RSVP to the church office, 692-2282, by noon on Mondays, April 10th, & 24th, and Tuesday, April 18th.

Midweek worship at **The Neighborhood** during Lent will feature Max Lucado's reflections in *The Final Week of Jesus*. Join us 5-5:45 pm for a meal in Fellowship Hall. Worship is 6-7 pm.

Church Building, Offices & All Programs will be closed on Monday, April 17th, for the Easter holiday!

First Time Guests! We are excited to report that the following persons visited for the first time this past Sunday: Edward Blair.

Member News: *We want to be as inclusive as possible with our Member News, so if you know about an honor someone received, an important event in someone's life, or about an illness or death, please call the church—692-2282. Thanks!*

♥**Hospitalized:** No one.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Dana, Michael & Jennifer Allison & Family on learning of the death of Dana's husband and Michael & Jennifer's father, George Allison, on March 22nd. Services were held on April 1st.

♥Our condolences are extended to Donna & Tom Long on learning of the death of their brother-in-law, Dr. Andrew Boyd, on March 25th in Milwaukee, WI.

♥We extend our sympathies to the family & friends of long-time FCC visitor, Lynn Anderson, who passed away on March 25th. Lynn's services will be this Saturday, April 8th, at 1:00 pm at First United Methodist Church.

♥We also extend our condolences to former FCC Associate Minister Ed Kolbe & Family on learning of the death of his wife, Mary Ruth Kolbe, on March 27th. Services were held at First Christian Church in Arlington, TX.

From the Mailbox. . .

Dear Friends of First Christian Church and the late Highland Heights Christian Church,

Please allow us to thank you for the cards, calls, and visits in the death of our beloved husband and father, Bill Anastopoulos. He was a kind, gentle man that loved all people. He never met a stranger and judged no one. He is greatly missed and his absence in our family will never be filled. Your kindness and remembrance of him was helpful to us all. May God bless you and yours.

In Christian Love,
Melba Anastopoulos
Mary & Bill Tanner
Ernest & Terri Anastopoulos
Billy & Glenda Anastopoulos

Dr. Hartman, Rev. Hoke, Elders, Church Members,

I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate you continued prayers for my health and for my husband. God has listened to you and my family. I am doing pretty well now. I recently had a chest x-ray and I still have some tumors in my abdomen and on my right lung. The good news is these tumors are stable now and not growing. The doctor has taken me off chemotherapy to give my body a rest. Even though the chemo helps, it is very difficult to endure. I will have another CT scan in a month. At this time I feel good (actually better than I have for a long time).

My name has been on the prayer list for a very long time and I do want to thank you. During the past six and one-half years, there have been many surgeries, so much chemotherapy, blood transfusions, and one emergency helicopter flight to Dallas. But through everything, you have graciously prayed for me. God has blessed me and my family with a caring church family and I am surviving.

We pray for each of you. May God's blessing be bestowed upon each of you. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,
Exie Nicholas

SERVING SUNDAY

ELDERS

4/9: Susan Buckley, Cathy Gately; Robert Hernandez, Presiding
Maundy Thursday, 4/13: Kenn Hill, Ann Hunter;
Dwight Ross III, Presiding

4/16: Dwight Ross III, Debbie Schmidt; Craig Reynolds, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

4/9: Ainslee Buckley, Hannah Ward, Luke Ward
4/16: Colleen James, Madi Showalter, Carly Westbrook

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

4/9: Francine Carraro & Sandy Hay
4/16: Bobby Dean & Mac Reid

APRIL DIACONATE SERVERS

Brandi Brannon, Kathleen Lauck, Madi & Chris Showalter, Carly & Slate Westbrook, Sandra Whatley, Bob & Mary Carlton, Jill Griffin, Colleen James, Sandra Ross, Francine Carraro, Bobby Dean, Sandy Hay, Mac Reid, Hannah & Luke Ward.

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, April 9, 2017 PALM SUNDAY / EASTER OFFERING

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)

10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)

12:00 All-Church Hot Dog Luncheon & Easter Egg Hunt
(Fellowship Hall & Grounds)

3:30 Pastor's Class (Grades 3-8) (Rm 310)

3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

5:00 Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)

5:00 Come As You Are (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403)

5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)

Monday, April 10, 2017

7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)

9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)

10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Office)

10:30 CWF Board Meeting (Rm 310)

11:45 CWF Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

6:00 Education Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)

6:00 CCF Staff Meeting (Rm 405)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

2:00 Library Cmte (Library)

6:00 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups:

CGRM Office (Rm 307)

Women's C.A.R.E. (Rm 304)

Parenting (Rm 305 & 306)

Anger Recovery (Rm 308)

Substance Abuse (Rm 309)

6:00 Property Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)

7:00 World Outreach Ministry Meeting (Library)

Wednesday, April 12, 2017

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)

8:00 Leadership Team Mtg (Renee's Office)

10:00 YAS Easter Parties & Pictures (Wed & Thurs)

10:00 Lenten Bible Study (Chapel)

5:00 Mid-Week Communion Service (Chapel)

5:00-5:45 Mid-Week Meal (Fellowship Hall)

6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)

6:00-8:00 Chi Rho & CYF (6th-12th) (Rm 403)

6:30-8:00 Young Disciples (K-5th) (Rm 402)

7:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall/Sanctuary)

Thursday, April 13, 2017 MAUNDY THURSDAY

6:30 Maundy Thursday Meal (Fellowship Hall)

7:00 Maundy Thursday Service (Sanctuary)

8:00 Prayer Vigil Begins (Chapel)

Friday, April 14, 2017 GOOD FRIDAY

Children Come First & Young Ages School Closed

8:00pm Prayer Vigil Ends (Chapel)

Sunday, April 16, 2017 EASTER / EASTER OFFERING

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

NO Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)

10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)

NO Sunday Evening Activities

Monday, April 17, 2017

Church Building, Offices & All Programs Closed for Easter Holiday

1:30 CWF Group 1 (1553 Singleton)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

Church Number 940-692-2282

FAX Number 940-696-3085

Web Page: www.firstchristianwf.com Church e-mail: susan@firstchristianwf.com

Dr. David Hartman, Senior Minister 692-2282

Rev. Renee Hoke, Associate Minister 692-2282

Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator 691-7265

Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries 763-8515

Maggie Ross, Interim Sunday Evening Youth Ministries 692-2282

Madi Showalter, Children's Ministries Intern 692-2282

Heather Dickerson, Director of Children Come First 687-2231

Karen Bivona, Director of Young Ages School 692-3640

Laurel Clement, Common Ground Recovery Ministries 642-7021

Susan Marrs, Executive Secretary Tina Williams, Financial Secretary

Ann Hunter, Receptionist Debbie Watson, Organist

FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Mar. 28) Cancelled due to weather

The Neighborhood (Wed., Mar. 29) 32

8:40 Worship . . . 32 10:45 Worship . . . 217

Total Worship 281

Sunday School 104

Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week \$15,815.66

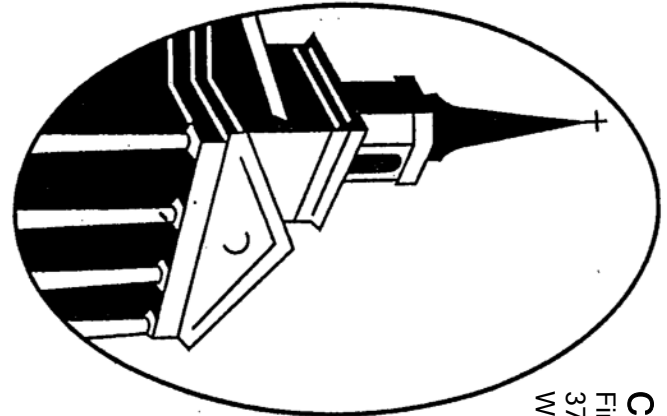
Sunday Receipts for 4/2/17 \$8,864.95

Through Apr. 3: Income \$197,762.68 Expenses \$206434.02

PERSECUTED CHURCH PRAYERS

THIS WEEK ARE FOR:

Pray that the gospel of Christ will spread freely in northern Nigeria.



CHRISTIAN CHALLENGER
First Christian Church
3701 Taft Boulevard
Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

THE CHRISTIAN CHALLENGER
Pub. No. (USPS 559-820) Published
biweekly by First Christian Church, 3701
Taft Blvd., Wichita Falls TX 76308-2315.
Periodical postage paid at Wichita Falls
TX. - POSTMASTER: Send Address
Changes to Christian Challenger, 3701
Taft Blvd., Wichita Falls, TX 76308-2315.