



JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

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<https://www.fcclc.org>

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Text Message Updates
Text FCCTextMe to
(844) 467-1299

Weekly Schedule

Worship Service: Sun. 10:15am
Hybrid Worship in Person &
Streamed via Zoom and Facebook Live
<https://www.fcclc.org/worship>

Contemplative Worship Service
1st Sunday of the month, 6:30pm
In-person only at this time.

Social Hours: Wed. 6:30pm
1st Wed: Crafters Group
3rd Wed: Adult Education Group

Spiritual Practices: Thu. 9:00am
Every Thursday on Zoom
Some practices we do regularly:
Lectio Divina, Centering Prayer, Christian
Meditation, Bible Journaling, Scripture
Doodling, Book Discussion, and more!

Announcements

- » We have lifted all the Covid restrictions. The CDC has removed the Covid restrictions and rates of infection are low in the area. This means we do not require or request persons wear masks. It is up to your discretion if you wish to wear a mask. We are also returning to indoor coffee hour and potlucks.
- » To limit the length of the newsletter, the FCC Board Meeting Minutes are published as a separate document, available at <https://www.fcclc.org/community/>

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WORSHIP COVENANT

In order to ensure that worship is a safe space for everyone who wants to return, we ask that you covenant with us to abide by the following safety guidelines:

- » While you may choose to wear a mask, they are no longer required or requested by FCC at this time. We may adjust this decision in the future based on the numbers.
- » Worship leaders, musicians, and speakers are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated.
- » We ask that you wear your name tag or a disposable name tag, available by the front doors.
- » Please maintain a six-foot distance between you and other members at all times when indoors.
- » When you enter, please take a bulletin, then find a spot to sit.
- » The Communion bread and wine are served row by row. Please accept the elements and pass the trays to your neighbor.
- » After the final hymn please make your way outside, taking your bulletin and any trash with you. There will be trash cans by the sanctuary doors

NOTES

This covenant will change as recommended safety measures in our county change. We will communicate any changes through email blasts and in person announcements.

The livestream recording begins at 10:10 am. At that time, any sounds above a whisper may be heard on the livestream. Anyone who gathers near the front of the sanctuary may be visible on camera.

If you have any questions about the covenant, please contact Rev. Patrick..

CALENDAR

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sun.	10:15 am	First Christian Church Worship
	10:15 am	St. John's Catholic Church Worship
Mon.	12:00 pm	Al-Anon Lunch Bunch (Parlor)
	6:30 pm	Celestial Sounds (Sanctuary)
Tue.	6:30 pm	Singing Out Las Cruces (Sanctuary)
Wed.	6:30 pm	Mesilla Valley Swing (Sanctuary)
Thu.	9:00 am	Spiritual Practices/Book Club (Zoom)
-(1st, 3rd)	6:30pm	Singing Out Las Cruces (Sanctuary)
Fri.	12:00 pm	Al-Anon (Parlor)
	6:00 pm	New World Drummers / Dancers
Sat.	1:00pm	HIV/AIDS Food Bank

BIRTHDAYS

1/5
Lynn Brightman

1/9
Melody Burns

1/14
Debra Darmata

1/27
Liana Brown

1/30
Allison

SPECIAL SERVICES

1/05	6:30 pm	Contemplative Worship (Chapel)
1/05	10:15 am	Monthly Cake Celebration
1/19	10:15 am	Church Family Potluck

SOCIAL GROUPS

1/15	11:30 am	Brown Bag Lunch
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ANNIVERSARIES

1/4
DeAnna & Perry Steinman

EVENTS

1/03	5:30 pm	Food Pantry Support Group
1/17	5:30 pm	Food Pantry Support Group
1/18	10:00 am	Weaving for Justice Sale

MEETINGS

1/18	10:00 am	FCC Board Meeting
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ELDERS & WORSHIP LEADERS

Sunday, Jan. 5 10:15 am

Leader: Karen Holmes
Offering: TBD
Communion: Zanté Garcia

Sunday, Jan. 12 10:15 am

Leader: Hilda McKee
Offering: Scott Hays-Strom
Communion: TBD

Sunday, Jan. 19 10:15 am

Leader: Esther Devall
Offering: Debby Johnson
Communion: Scott Hays-Strom

Sunday, Jan. 26 10:15 am

Leader: Eric Hays-Strom
Offering: Melissa McKenzie-Shaw
Communion: Debby Johnson

Sunday, Feb. 2 10:15 am

Leader: Zanté Garcia
Offering: Paul Cook
Communion: Melissa McKenzie-Shaw

Sunday, Feb. 9 10:15 am

Leader: Sue Bogart
Offering: Deb Cook
Communion: Paul Cook

Sunday, Feb. 16 10:15 am

Leader: TBD
Offering: Esther Devall
Communion: Deb Cook

Sunday, Feb. 23 10:15 am

Leader: Debby Johnson
Offering: Scott Hays-Strom
Communion: Esther Devall

NEWS & LETTERS

PASTOR'S LETTER

Rev. Patrick Crocker

“... ‘Who do the people think the True Human Being is? What are they saying?’ ...
“How do you see me? Who do you say that I am?” – Matthew 16:13b & 15b, First Nations Version

“What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?” – William C. Dix, 1865

I’m writing from the front side of Christmas, where my own playlist is mostly Advent songs. Despite my attempts to leave Christmas songs for the 12 days of Christmas (12/25-1/5), I hold a special place in my heart for the hymn, “What Child is This?” I remember different lyrics than what appear in our hymnal for the 2nd part of verse 2 (possibly from an earlier edition) that tied the hymn to Good Friday as well as Christmas. Because of that, the image of Michaelangelo’s Pieta comes to mind every time I hear the carol.

A recent YouTube recommendation was for a version of “What Child is This?” combined with “Child of the Poor” by The Hound + The Fox. Haunting vocals declare “This is Christ revealed to the world in the eyes of a child, a child of the poor.” It connects the teaching, work, and experience of Jesus to the child on Mary’s lap. Not just the beginning, nor the end, but the whole.

Around this time of year, many of us question the image or identity of ourselves, though we talk about it in terms of “resolutions” to improve or refine our bodies, minds, spirits, or communities. Who do people think we are? What are they saying? How do we see ourselves? It is good to consider our beginnings: family of birth and its heritage (both blessings and baggage), family of faith and its traditions (both sustaining and starving), land of birth and its history (both shining and shameful). It is often helpful to consider also our endings: what do we want to leave as legacy; what do we want people to say about who we were and how we influenced them? It is also well to consider our current context: where do we find ourselves, at this place and this time; to what are we called?

Perhaps it is fitting that the answer given by Simon Peter in Matthew 16:16 (“child of the living Creator”) is also the answer to the carol’s question, and to our own. Who are we and who are we called to be, in this moment? We are Children of the Sacred One

who enters into our vulnerability, and, in so doing, blesses our past, present, and future.

How then shall we live out that beautiful identity?

Shalom,
Patrick

If you'd like to have a pastoral visit or chat on the phone, you're welcome to call/text me at (575).551.1717 or email me at Rev.Patrick.Crocker@gmail.com.

Notes

Several of our faith communities will be joining in worship on 1/22 for an ecumenical prayer service for unity. This year marks the 1700 th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea. Peace Lutheran Church is hosting the service at 6:30pm (with refreshments following), and I have been invited to preach.

Our Wednesday Evening discussion group resumes on 1/29 at 6:30pm on the Zoom link for Spiritual Practices (found on the Community/Meetings page on the church website). We'll talk about scripture we've found painful (like the "clobber verses" often used to end arguments) and how we might navigate past them.

Scriptures for December

- » January 5 – Matthew 2:1-12
- » January 12 – Luke 3:15-22
- » January 19 – John 2:1-11
- » January 26 – Luke 4:14-21

COMMUNITY

FAITH ACTION COMMITTEE

Ralph Holmes

The Faith In Action Committee wants to thank you for your support of programs and opportunities we brought to you in 2024. Some of the mission partners gave you a place to put in your time while others just needed some financial support. In each case our members stepped up and did what they could. Faith In Action is putting together our Mission Moments Calendar for 2025. If you have an organization that helps the community, local or on this planet, that you feel could be highlighted in one of our moments please attend the next Faith In Action meeting January 9 th at 7 PM via the Zoom link on our website or talk with Ralph Holmes or Rev. Patrick. We are looking for ways our members can “take action” through activism, volunteering time or supporting the cause in other ways. Ralph will not be leading the meeting in January and possibly for a few months, so we could also use someone to facilitate with Rev. Patrick. The Christian Faith calls us to follow in Jesus’s footsteps. He was a doer, a helper and a challenger so we must also be.

MORNING STARS

Paul Cook, 28 November, 2024

In the darkness of the clear crisp air of early dawn, the stars shine bright.

Reminding us of all those we’re connected to. Reminding us of all those who came before and those who will come after. Reminding us that we are not alone.

Our footsteps follow those who walked the edges of Lake Lucero thousands of years ago, their footprints fossilized in the shores of time, gazing at the stars in wonder, as we do now. Looking for connectedness, as we do now, and longing to belong.

Give thanks for our connectedness and for the breath of life that blows through the millennia, tying us all together, and to The Great Comforter.

2025 BUDGET

Donald Wilson, Treasurer

The 2025 Budget for the church is based on the following assumptions. Our income is based on actual pledges plus a conservative estimate for non-pledged income. We are also including contract rental income with the exception of the Crestline rental income since we don't know when that will end. Our expenses are based on historical levels with an upward adjustment of 4% for inflation and 5% for staff wage increases. The budget proposal includes an increase in outreach from 5% to 6% with a goal of adding 1% per year until we reach 10%. We are adding an Office Administrator position at 20 hours per week. This person will be responsible for many functions that have historically been performed by volunteers that are quite frankly burned out. Since we are committed to the well-being of our members the Board made the decision to hire someone to perform these duties instead of relying on volunteers from within our membership. The technologist who has been doing admin work, will now focus on the video and broadcast of Sunday (and special) services with his hours reduced accordingly. With these considerations in mind we expect to present a deficit budget to the congregation at the December 8th congregational meeting. As it stands right now, the projected deficit is \$16,000. The congregation has always been generous and has always stepped up to meet our fiscal challenges. This budget is presented in good faith with the expectation that our new pastor and our inclusivity and openness will continue to attract new members that will help us grow in spirit and service to our community.

POCKET CHANGE FUNDRAISER

We wish to offer a heartfelt thank you to the congregation, and report that over \$200 was raised for Casa de Peregrinos over Sandy Weber's two-week fundraiser in November.

Thank you to all who contributed, and to Sandy for leading the effort!

WHO ARE WE?

First Christian Church affirms the Good News of Jesus the Christ as revealed through Scripture, tradition, experience, scholarship, and reason. Within the community of faith, we are called to discern through prayer, study, and discussion God's message for today.



The Newsletter is published monthly by First Christian Church. It is available free of charge to members and friends of FCC. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform and to inspire, and to invite participation in the life of the congregation, the community, and the world. Submissions are welcome, including announcements of activities of interest to members, prayer concerns, thank-you notes, directory updates, etc. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. The due date for submissions is each month on the 25th.