



The Rainbow Table

Fellowship, Faith, and Full Plates-Every Story Matters

LET'S CELEBRATE



Photo by: Bruce Weber



Photo by: Donald Wilson

A special thank you
to Jerry Romero for
his 30 years of
service to First
Christian Church.

In this Issue

Who We Are.....	3
Pastor's Ponderings.....	4-5
Special Events.....	8-9
Mother Sarah's Orphanage.....	6-7
Weaving for Justice.....	10-11
Ministry Partner Updates:	
Celestial Sounds.....	12
Singing Out Las Cruces.....	16
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	13
Elders & Worship Leaders.....	13
Worship Covenant.....	14
Regularly Scheduled Events.....	15

Poetry & Prose

None in this Issue

Photos & Images

Patrick & Jerry (Photo by Bruce Weber).....	1
Jerry's Cake (Photo by Donald Wilson).....	1
Mother Sarah's Orphanage.....	6
Singing Out Concert-Chosen Family (Photo by Liz Brink).....	9
Border Immersion Group from Delaware (Photo by Christine Eber).....	11
Celestial Sounds Concert (Photo by David Rice).....	12
Singing Out Las Cruces Silly Group Photo (Photo by Liz Brink).....	16

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 God's message for today through prayer, study, and discussion.



This newsletter is published monthly by First Christian Church. It is available free of charge to everyone. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform, 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, poems or photos of your own creation, etc. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. The due date for submissions each month is the 20th.

Submit items for the August newsletter
by July 20th by emailing them to Liz in the front office at:

lbrink@fcclc.org

Pastor's Ponderings

As servants (lit. “slaves”) of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. 1 Peter 2:16 (NRSV)

What has freedom meant to us in the past? What might it mean for today?

The scripture above is in the midst of a wild chunk of instructions with extreme emotional temperatures. “Honor everyone. Love the family of believers.” (Yay! Absolutely!) “Fear God.” (Hmm. Ok, I guess, though I prefer a different word.) “For the Lord’s sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors Honor the emperor.” (Eh, depends on the emperor.) And then come the directions for slaves to endure good masters and bad alike. (Yikes!)

These surrounding scriptures reflect the early church’s navigation of a worldview that the only change possible comes from God. (For further reflection, read Barbara Brown Taylor’s *People’s History of Christianity*, especially the subchapter on Progress and the responses to Darwin’s theory of evolution.) In the midst of them, this seedling shows up. It reflects issues in many of the early churches (see also Paul’s frustration in 1 & 2 Corinthians). Since we are free, how shall we express that freedom? It echoes the temptation of Christ, “Since you are the Son of God, ...”

Perhaps the ways that Jesus answered those temptations might be helpful for us as we wrestle with the temptations of freedom. Yes, we have the freedom to look to only our own physical needs, but we have the call to see ourselves as whole beings with a spiritual self as well as physical. Yes, we have the freedom to use our gifts and strengths in dramatic ways, but spectacle requires unending success, while spiritual growth requires our vulnerability and growth (which itself requires failure). Yes, we have the freedom to accumulate power and resources, but unless it is used for/with the overlooked & ignored, it slides too easily into narcissism. A more concrete and contemporary example: we have the freedom to buy fireworks, but the responsibility to not put extra work on the ER team.

Pastor's Ponderings cont.

If our freedom comes at the cost of someone else's chains, we are living the Economy of Empire, not the Deliverance of the Divine.

Shalom,
Patrick

If you'd like to have a pastoral visit or chat on the phone, you're welcome to call/text me at 575.635.6489 or email me at Rev.Patrick.Crocker@gmail.com.

Scriptures for July

July 6 – Galatians 6:1-16

July 13 – Colossians 1:1-14

July 20 – Colossians 1:15-28

July 27 – Colossians 2:6-19

Wednesday Evening discussion group this month will happen by Zoom on July 23 at 6:30pm (use the Spiritual Practices link on the church website).

Our faith community is developing a Visitor Corps program. If you would like to help with visiting some of the people we don't see in worship on Sunday, please let me know. We have Communion kits available and will provide everything you need.

Mother Sarah's Orphanage

My dear friends at First Christian Church in Las Cruces, greetings from Mother Sarah's Orphanage in Lukomera Village in Uganda. We wish to thank you for the blessings you have been giving to our children for this past year. And we pray daily for God to bless you all. Let me introduce you to some of the people of Mother Sarah's. The boys are: Ismail, Shafick, Allan and Derrick. At the right of the line is my colleague Wassaw. In Uganda all boy twins are called Wassaw. Wassaw is a farmer and a warden for the children of the orphanage here.



Since my last letter to you all, we have now purchased all the bunk beds our children need so that they will not be sleeping on the hard ground. This is especially important to us, as during our recent heat wave and drought, a large venomous snake was caught inside one of the sleeping rooms. We are still waiting to raise money for one last mattress and the bedding to go with it.

Dad Eric asked me to share with you some of the dreams and goals for Mother Sarah's Orphanage in the coming days.

Mother Sarah's Orphanage cont.

Currently we all must trek over a kilometre every day to collect water at a well, a well that is shared with livestock and wild animals. We now have a goal to dig a well on our own property. This will cost us over 9,000,000 UGX (Uganda Shillings) which is approximately US\$2,500. This will benefit the children with cleaner water, and relieve us of a long trek to collect water from far away. Once we start receiving some funds, we can start building this well a little bit at a time. Dad Eric wanted to save it up and send the money all at once, but really, it's better to send a little at a time.

We also are looking for sponsors for several of our girls for school. There are three school terms here in Uganda. Each student must pay US\$150 per term.

Ever since the USA stopped the USAID program, we now have to pay US\$500 per month for medicines for the children.



Until next month,
Joseph

Special Events



Event: Indivisible Poster Making

Date: July 10th

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 2-7pm



Event: Indivisible- Border Protest

Date: July 12th

Location: Santa Teresa-Location TBD

Time: 9am



Event: Indivisible General Meeting

Date: July 13th

Location: First Christian Church

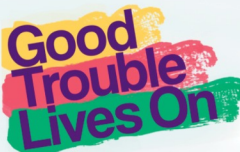
Time: 2-4pm

Event: Indivisible- Good Trouble Lives On- In Honor of John Lewis

Date: July 17th

Location: Lohman Avenue & Telshor Blvd.

Time: 8-10am



*Bring your signs. Register at:

<https://www.mobilize.us/john-lewis-actions/event/804771/>

Special Events



Event: FCC Board Meeting

Date: July 19th

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 9 am



Event: Weaving for Justice Sale

Date: July 19th

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 10am - 3pm



Event: Indivisible General Meeting

Date: July 27th

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 2-4pm



Photo from: Liz Brink

Weaving for Justice

Weaving for Justice is honored to be in solidarity with eleven Maya women's weaving collectives in Chiapas, Mexico. We take strength from their commitment to stand up for the dignity and freedom of all people. The weavers participate in what they call "the resistance." By this they mean they resist the efforts of powerful governmental and non-governmental entities to strip them of control of their lands, resources, and communities. The resistance movement was inspired by an uprising in 1994 in which indigenous people demanded rights long-denied them. From the beginning, they have wanted their movement to be for all: 'Para Todos Todo, Para Nosotros Nada' ('Everything for Everyone, Nothing For Us').

Zapatismo, remains a driving force behind the everyday struggle for life with dignity in Chiapas, as well as an inspiration and galvanizing source of international solidarity throughout the world. It is often theorized as seven principles:

Obedecer y No Mandar (To Obey, Not Command)
Proponer y No Imponer (To Propose, Not Impose)
Representar y No Suplantar (To Represent, Not Supplant)
Convencer y No Vencer (To Convince, Not Conquer)
Construir y No Destruir (To Construct, Not Destroy)
Servir y No Servirse (To Serve Others, Not Serve Oneself)
Bajar y No Subir (To Work From Below, Not Seek To Rise)

Adapted from "The Concept of Zapatismo" by Levi Gahman

May these guiding principles strengthen us in our efforts to defend the rights of all, in our nation and throughout the world.

Weaving for Justice holds sales of hand-woven, embroidered and felted textiles from weaving collectives in Chiapas in the Atrium of First Christian Church on the 3rd Saturday of each month from 10-3. Our next sale is May 20th. The photo of the owl below shows one of the many little felted animals made by a collective in Chamula, Chiapas. All proceeds from our sales go back to the collectives. www.weaving-for-justice.org

Weaving for Justice cont.

On June 20th, Kim Sorensen and I shared the Weaving for Justice story with a Border Servant Corps Immersion group of Juniors and Seniors from The Friends School in Wilmington, Delaware. The students came to us after volunteering at a farm in the morning. It was super hot that day, but they hung in there with us and got a reward for their attention when they saw the little felted animals and other textiles made by Maya women in Chiapas, Mexico. Many felted turtles, bees, and crocodiles are now residing in Delaware!

At our Saturday sale we brought in over \$2,000 for Maya weaving collectives and students and \$150 in memberships for Weaving for Justice! It was more than I remember us bringing in on any 3rd Saturday sale to date. We never expected this on such a hot day.

-Christine Eber, Weaving for Justice



Photo from: Christine Eber

Celestial Sounds

Celestial Sounds celebrated the 4th of July early with an evening filled with music celebrating our nation. The ladies, accompanied by Barbara Toth on piano, shared a program of American folk tunes, marches, and hymns. The music ranged from rousing and celebratory to poignant and prayerful. Part of the program included a solo of the Star Spangled Banner, Shenandoah, The Water is Wide, Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, Battle Hymn of the Republic, and a sing-a-long, including armed forces anthems and This Land Is Your Land. It wrapped up with Will the Circle Be Unbroken. We appreciate all the church members, family and friends who came out and filled our audience.

-Deb Cook



Photo by: David Rice



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

July 4th - Dorothy Francey

July 8th- Mike Bureman

July 10th- Grady McCullough

July 18th - Paul Cook



Anniversaries

July 18th -Bruce & Cynthia Bergthold



Elders & Worship Leaders

July 6th 2025

Worship Leader: Esther Devall

Offering Elder: Zanté García

Communion Elder: Scott Hays-Strom

July 13th, 2025

Worship Leader: Eric Hays-Strom

Offering Elder: TBD

Communion Elder: Zanté García

July 20th, 2025

Worship Leader: Zanté García

Offering Elder: Paul Cook

Communion Elder: TBD

July 27th, 2025

Worship Leader: TBD

Offering Elder: Debby Johnson

Communion Elder: Paul Cook

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. Masks are available if you would like one.
- 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 use the stickers available to show your comfort level with personal contact. Green: welcomes hugs and handshakes; Yellow: Ask first; Red: No hugs or handshakes, please. You are welcome to change stickers as needed.
- Please be mindful of personal space and offer greater amounts to those who are masked."
- When you enter, please take a bulletin, then find a spot to sit.
- Communion bread and juice is served at the front. Directions will be provided at that time. If you prefer to remain seated, elements will be brought to you.
- After the final hymn please make your way outside, taking your bulletin and any trash with you. There will be trash cans by the front 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 Pastor Patrick at pastor@fccl.org

Regularly Scheduled Events

Weekly Schedule:

Bible Study.....Sunday, 9 AM

First Christian Church Worship Service.....Sunday, 10:15 AM

Hybrid Worship in person & streamed via Zoom & Facebook Live
www.fcclc.org/worship

St. John's Catholic Church Worship.....Sunday, 10:15 AM

Men's Breakfast (at University IHOP).....Wednesday, 9 AM

Spiritual Practices.....Thursday, 9:00 AM

Al-Anon Meeting.....Friday 12:00 PM

Al-Anon Meeting.....Monday 12:00 PM

HIV/AIDS Food Pantry.....Saturday, 12-2 PM

Monthly Schedule

Celebrate Birthdays of the Month.....First Sunday, 11:30 AM

Contemplative Worship.....First Sunday, 6:30 PM

Crafter's Group.....First Wednesday, 6:30 PM

Potluck.....Third Sunday, 11:30 AM

Brown Bag Lunch.....Third Wednesday, 11:30 AM

Discussion Group.....Fourth Wednesday, 6:30 PM

To limit the length of the newsletter, the FCC Board Meeting Minutes are published as a separate document,
available at www.fcclc.org/community

Singing Out Las Cruces

Singing Out Las Cruces would like to thank First Christian Church for another wonderful season! Our concerts this past weekend were a huge success and we are so incredibly grateful for your support. It means so much to our group to have our rehearsal space in a warm, welcoming place with a congregation of allies that are ready and willing to learn and do things to support the LGBTQIA+ Community. We are looking forward to being back with you all in August!



Photo from: Liz Brink

Contact Information

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