



The Rainbow Table



Fellowship, Faith, and Full Plates-Every Story Matters

A Message from the Board

A New Year, A New Board

I wanted to take a moment to welcome the 2026 Church Board on board. It is hard to believe we are almost to February. The January Board meeting was well attended and we are off to a great start for the year. Thank you all for accepting the challenge to serve our church in a new way. Any church member, or friend of the church is welcome to come to board meetings. If you have questions about church business, or additional ideas that you would like introduced, feel free to speak to me or any other member on the board. Opportunities to serve on various committees are also available. Our next meeting is on Feb. 21 at 9 am. I am looking forward to a fun and meaningful year with all of you.

Thanks,
Deb Cook,
Board President



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Pastor's Ponderings

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always "me first," doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel, takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, MSG) It's that time of year again. Whether we think of anatomically incorrect hearts & chocolate, wacky sales gimmicks in the name of 2 famous presidents, or dirty foreheads, it's here. A day to buy/make something in the name of love and a day to reflect on how we love. The passage from 1 Corinthians gets dusted off for weddings, but doesn't see much light outside of that. I have to wonder how our communal life would go if we were to propose having this scripture in public spaces as much as some insist on having the 10 Commandments. Then I think of how our culture celebrates breaking the first and last especially. Maybe because it's easier to worship small gods (who are disposable when something newer & shinier comes along) and we've gotten so used to cultivated covetousness that we sometimes don't recognize it when the ad starts. As a community of faith, we are called to radical love. (That's "radical" in its original "deep-rooted" not the "gnarly/cool" with which I grew up.) This bone-deep love is that to which we return in Lent and which cherishes even our ashes. It is a model of servant-leadership and discipleship because it is the original root from which the new branches grow. With the ashes on our heads, we also humbly admit that it is the pole-star by which we steer, though we will not get there on this earth.

Or perhaps, as we transition from Epiphany to Lent, we might see it as the star which guides us toward Bethlehem, and then beyond. It's past time for a course correction. Love-in-service, not spectacle.

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.

March 1 - John 3:1-17

March 22 - Psalm 130

March 8 - Romans 5:1-11

March 29 (Palm Sunday) - Matthew 21:1-11

March 15 - Psalm 23

Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam



/Cheer gon chong-gah, cheer gon on-om/

“A country without a language, a country without a soul.”

This month, and around the 17th in particular, a flood of green, shamrocks, “leprechauns” (true Irish leprechauns are very different than the Americanized version), and other “Irish” things will start popping up as people celebrate their Irish heritage and others play at being Irish because they think that during the month of March “everyone is Irish”! What people often fail to realize is that like many other countries, Ireland and its people are the result of over 700 years of colonization and the intentional and systematic erasure of Indigenous Irish traditions. Many of the stereotypes people pull to mind when they think of Ireland are all the result of colonization. Britain systematically used religious suppression, apartheid-style division, and organized violence as a means to gain access to Ireland and its resources.

Ireland, thought of by most as a place of rolling green hills, was once covered in lush forests. The deforestation of Ireland was a strategic plan used to facilitate the building of British ships. Native Wolves were hunted to extinction and “The Great Irish Potato Famine”, it wasn’t a famine, and it wasn’t Irish; it was an intentional starvation of the Irish people by the British empire. Prior to the start of the potato blight (a water mold, *Phytophthora infestans*) that destroyed around 75% of potato crops was a systematic and extreme forced exportation of Irish grown crops. British colonizers took over land and restricted the people of Ireland, in particular Irish Catholics from owning their own land. This forced farmers into a tenant system that meant they only had small plots on which to grow crops and the majority of their crops were being shipped off to the British Empire. This meant that people of Ireland ended up relying heavily on just one variety of potato and when the blight came there was no other variety of potato available that could withstand the spread. Potatoes began to rot in the ground. Despite their main source of sustenance being destroyed, the British Empire continued to heavily export the other crops being grown, leaving nothing to distribute to the people of Ireland. During this time around 2 million Irish starved to death.

In March you are likely to hear a lot about the now infamous St. Patrick, who wore green (blue is actually the color of St. Patrick), and “drove the snakes” from Ireland. Some people only know this manipulated children’s story about the Saint and how he literally drove snakes from Ireland’s shores. Many of these people actually believe that Ireland has no snakes because of this, not because Ireland has never had a native snake species and that the “snakes” were actually a metaphor for St. Patrick helping to eradicate the indigenous spiritual traditions of druids. The Druids of Ireland were the caretakers of cultural knowledge.....

“Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam” cont.

...The Druids led ceremonies for solstices, equinoxes, and sacred festivals like Imbolc and Samhain (which later became Halloween), and were herbalists, healers, astronomers, and the keepers of Ireland’s oral traditions. St. Patrick’s goal wasn’t just to spread Christianity it was to completely erase and replace Indigenous tradition with Christian tradition. Another common tale that people perpetuate about St. Patrick is the “poor, good, Christian, Patrick” narrative. Born in Roman Britain, most likely modern Wales, Patrick, at 16, was taken by raiders and enslaved in Ireland for around 6 years. He escaped and returned to Britain where he became a Christian priest and returned to Ireland with the goal of converting the Irish population to Christianity. He then proceeded to use political alliances and religious coercion to spread Christianity amidst the increasing British colonization of Ireland which was already over 200 years in the making. While Patrick’s enslavement shouldn’t have happened, it is not justification for the everlasting damage that Patrick caused to Ireland. In a similar thread as the eradication of cultural traditions, linguistic traditions were also strategically attacked. Indigenous languages like Irish (Gaeilge- pronounced /gwayl-guh), Welsh, and Scots Gaelic were outlawed and suppressed to the point of near extinction.

Despite St. Patrick’s efforts, Ireland’s Indigenous traditions never fully disappeared. Instead, they were woven into Christianity in ways that still survive today. Brigid the beloved Celtic goddess of fertility, healing, and poetry was “converted” into a St. Brigid, a Christian saint. Pagan festivals became Christian holidays; Samhain became Halloween, Imbolc became Candlemas, Lughnasadh became Lammas; sacred wells & stone circles, places once used for Druidic rituals became pilgrimage sites for Catholic saints. Despite Christianity taking hold, the soul deep at the heart of Irish spirituality never fully disappeared. It survived in whispers, in the Gaeltachs where people kept the language alive, in folklore, and in the quiet reverence for the land that never faded. And today, many Irish people, myself included, are reclaiming that ancestral knowledge, reconnecting to the history that was almost lost, and rediscovering the spiritual practices that predate colonization.

This month, and on March 17th in particular, I encourage you to try to be mindful of the history that doesn’t get told, the traditions lost and the wounds that still bleed in Ireland and it’s people today. Even now, all these many years later, there is still not a unified Ireland; Northern Ireland remains under British rule. So, I would ask that this month, do your part to help the reclamation of Irish tradition, and correct the spread of misinformation about the past so that the long process of decolonizing our history can continue.

“Sláinte is Táinte!” /sloyne-chee iss toyne-chee!/ (Health & Wealth),

-Liz Brink

Singing Out Las Cruces

Free!

GENDER AFFIRMING Vocal WORKSHOP

Free!



DATE:

SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST, 2026

TIME:

11 AM - 1 PM

LOCATION:

Isabel Crouch Reader's Theatre-NMSU Las Cruces Campus
(Located between Clara Belle Williams Hall (English Building) and the
Communication Sciences Building)

JOIN US FOR:

- Lessons on how our voices work, the effects of HRT on vocal anatomy, how to ease voice changes while on HRT.
- Vocal Exercises to protect, strengthen, and ease the transition of your voice.
- Discussion/Q & A with Trans/Gender Non-Conforming folx about their experiences with voice changes while on HRT.
- Snacks and Drinks!

While the workshop is open and available to everyone we ask that if you do not yourself identify as trans/gender non conforming/nonbinary, etc. please allow the RSVP spots to be filled first by those that do so that we can best serve the community.

You can RSVP the day of and if there is space we will gladly let you join. We will in no way ask people to confirm how they identify in order to attend.

RSVP HERE:



RSVP at www.singingoutlascruces.org

Hosted by:
Singing Out Las Cruces



In collaboration with:



An Invitation from NMSU



LET'S CELEBRATE AMERICAN INDIAN WEEK

Honoring the traditions, voices, and stories of native communities around the world.

March

**MON
23**

12:00pm – 1:00pm, AISC NTR 112
**Lunch & Learn with
Honorable Judge Mondragón**

**WEDS
25**

11:30am – 1:00pm, AISC
Indian Taco Luncheon

**THURS
26**

11:30am – 1:00pm, AISC NTR 112
**Confronting Violence Against Native
Communities in New Mexico: A Call to Action**

**FRI
27**

10:00am – 3:00pm, AISC Courtyard
Arts & Crafts Market

**FRI
27**

5:30pm – 7:30pm, CCSU Auditorium
Miss Native American NMSU Pageant

**SAT
28**

10:00am – 3:00pm, AISC Courtyard
**Arts & Crafts Market & Dance Group
Performance by the Zuni Olla Maidens**

- AISC - American Indian Student Center
- CCSU - Corbett Center Student Union
- NTR - North Training Room



Office of Land Grant
Inclusive Mission



**ALL ARE
WELCOME
HERE** ♥

Special Events



Event: Singing Out Las Cruces-Last Open Rehearsal
(This is the last chance for new members to join this season.)

Date: Tuesday, March 10th

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 6:30 pm



Event: Indivisible Project Las Cruces-Paper Clips the Film

Date: Saturday, March 14th

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 2-3:30pm



Event: Singing Out Las Cruces-Gender Affirming Vocal Workshop

Date: Saturday, March 21st

Location: Isabel Crouch Reader's Theatre-NMSU

Time: 11 am - 1 pm



Event: FCC Board Meeting

Date: Saturday, March 21st

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 9 am



Event: Weaving for Justice Monthly Sale

Date: Saturday, March 21st

Location: First Christian Church

Time: 10 am - 3 pm

Special Events



Event: Indivisible Project Las Cruces-No Kings Protest

Date: Saturday, March 28th

Location: Albert Johnson Park, 800 Main Street

Time: 10 am -Noon

*Non-Perishable food drive. A portion of the donations will go to The Pantry at FCC.

Event: Indivisible Project Las Cruces - Monthly Meetings

GENERAL MEETINGS

2nd & 4th Sunday of each month

2pm - 3:30pm

EDUCATION NIGHTS

1st Thursday of each month

6pm - 7:30pm



POLITICS AND PEACE OF MIND

Join us for open conversation where your voice matters!

1st & 3rd Thursday of each month

2pm - 3:30pm

PROTEST POSTER MAKING AND POSTCARD SIGNING

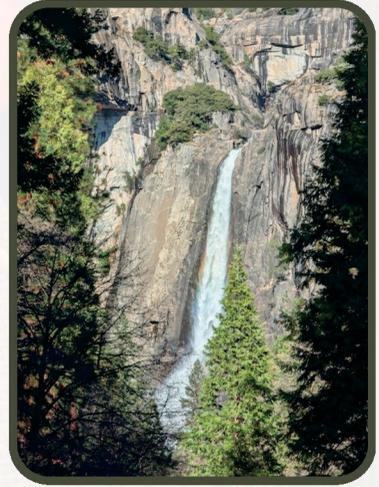
Create your next rally poster (or banner for the underpass). Enjoy the community of writing postcards to our representatives and other elected officials on important topics. Make your voice heard

2nd & 4th Thursday of each month

Love Stories

Waterfalls descend
Silver threads on granite walls-
Old years melt away.

-Haiku and photo by Esther Devall



After both of my parents passed away, my siblings and I sold the home they had built for their retirement in Tallahassee, Florida. The house was located across the street from my brother David. After it was sold, my son Eric and I returned to Tallahassee to spend Thanksgiving with David.

Every year, David hosts a neighborhood wiener roast and bonfire on the night before Thanksgiving. That year, he invited the new homeowners to join the gathering. Their daughter, Heather, who lived in Miami, was visiting for the holiday and came with her parents.

My son Eric, who lives in California, met Heather that evening. They immediately connected and began dating. Over time, their relationship grew, and a few years later they were married. This year, they celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary.

If my parents hadn't died and we hadn't sold their house, Eric and Heather would never have met. I like to believe that my parents, watching from heaven, had a hand in bringing Eric and Heather together.

-Esther Devall

Love Stories

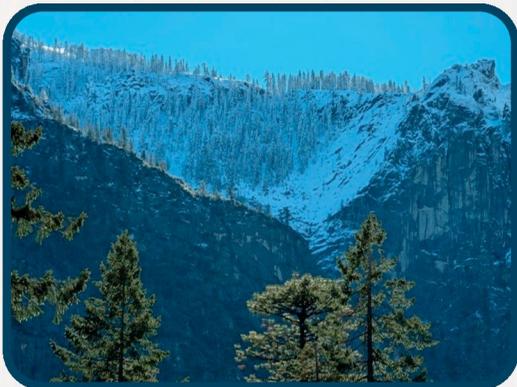
When I started college at NMSU, I was accepted into a student cooperative education program at the university. The Physical Sciences Lab had a contract to operate a network of satellite tracking stations around the globe. The data was used to map the earth and was a precursor to the Global Positioning System (GPS). A station manager was assigned to each tracking station and students were sent out to handle general day to day operations.

I started college in August of 1981. I attended classes for Fall and Spring of that school year and went through two summer sessions. After that I was sent to the Philippines for ten months, the Fall and Spring semesters starting 1982. I came back in time to attend summer school. While I was working at the tracking station in the Philippines, I had to sign logs for the data collected every day. There was no overlap with the student I replaced, but I noticed her name on the station logs.

When I started summer school on my return, I attended a couple of classes with that student who operated the tracking station right before me. She was another engineering student who happened to be a middle school friend of Debbie and was her college roommate. During those classes, I attended some study sessions with other engineering students that included Debbie's roommate and we sometimes studied at their dorm room. And that is how Debbie and I met.

Over Christmas break of 1983 Debbie and I were both working at the university. We had our very first date that Christmas at La Posta restaurant. We began spending a lot of time together and sometimes studied together at the university library. One of the times that we were studying at the library, Debbie proposed to me on my calculator. She typed the question in and handed me my calculator. And of course, I said yes!

-Paul Cook



Snow-crowned pines listen,
Mountains teach my restless heart
How to start anew.

-Haiku and photo by Esther Devall

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. All proceeds from our sales go back to the collectives.

www.weaving-for-justice.org

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

February 9th - John Schwendinger
February 14th - Ralph Holmes
February 15th - Pat Weathers
February 15th - Liz Brink
February 15th - Irene Brink
February 23rd - Karin Bergthold



Anniversaries

February 20th - Karen & Ralph Holmes
February 20th - Linda & Pat Weathers



March Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

March 5th - Deb Rodriguez
March 8th - Hilda McKee
March 16th - Aletta Wilson
March 17th - Debora Lujan
March 18th - Bethany McKenzie-Shaw
March 18th - Wayne Huber
March 19th - Rita Bureman
March 28th - Rev. Patrick Crocker

Anniversaries

March 21st - Jack LeSage & Steve Blinks



Elders & Worship Leaders

March 8th, 2026

Worship Leader: Hilda McKee
Offering Elder: Rev. Patrick Crocker
Communion Elder: Esther Devall

March 22, 2026

Worship Leader: Esther Devall
Offering Elder: Debby Johnson
Communion Elder: Paul Cook

March 15, 2026

Worship Leader: Deb Cook
Offering Elder: Paul Cook
Communion Elder: Rev. Patrick Crocker

March 29, 2026

Worship Leader: TBD
Offering Elder: Scott Hays-Strom
Communion Elder: Debby Johnson

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@fclcl.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, 9:00 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
Potluck.....Third Sunday, 11:30 AM
Brown Bag Lunch.....Third Wednesday, 11:30 AM

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

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.



Published monthly, the FCC Newsletter is meant 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 April newsletter
by March 20th by emailing them to Liz in the front office at:
lbrink@fcclc.org**

Contact Information

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For Text Message Updates
Text FCCTextMe to
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