

FIRST NEWS
The Newsletter of
First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ), San Marcos, Texas

a place to belong

November 2005

a place to become

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2005

The annual congregational meeting will be at the close of the 10:30 am worship service November 20, 2005.

It is important for every member to attend this meeting so that you can share in the planning for the First Christian Church of San Marcos local, state, national, and world ministry for our Lord.

The meeting agenda will include the following important items:

- Selecting Elders, Deacons, and Officers
- Approving the Annual Budget for 2006
- Approving a revised Church Constitution and Bylaws
- A member satisfaction survey. Every member present will have the opportunity to answer questions concerning the church including present church ministries and whether or not they are compatible with the member's spiritual needs.
The survey will also help for future ministry planning.

As a gentle reminder, the Christian Church is a representative democracy, with the leadership of the church taking its direction from the congregation. I, therefore, encourage you to take this opportunity to exercise your right as a member of the First Christian Church, San Marcos, and participate in the annual meeting.

There will be **no** 8:30 am worship service November 20, 2005. Sunday school will be at 9:30 am.

Following the congregational meeting, we will celebrate Thanksgiving as a church family with a pot luck dinner and fellowship. The turkey will be furnished but we will rely on you to bring covered dishes filled with your favorite Thanksgiving recipes.

I look forward to seeing you at the congregational meeting and the Thanksgiving dinner to follow.

God Bless This Church,

Art Johnson, Board Chairman

You crown the year with Your Good Gifts. There is more than enough where You have been. (Psalm 65:11, New Life Version)

FROM THE DESK OF JAMES -- SENIOR INTERIM MINISTER HAVE A BLESSED THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving has become an event - a time to travel, prepare food, over eat and complain of being too full, watch football, take a nap, and plan for the overcrowded shopping day on Friday. Recapping the day is like watching a painful documentary on how to not waste such an important day.

The most fundamental component of Thanksgiving is family. The most important commodity in the world is our family. The most important gesture is a hug. The most important words are, "I love you."

The Most Important Figure is The Source of All Existence. We call The Source God. For that reason, the initial "Proclamation of Thanksgiving" on June 20, 1776 was inaugurated to read "A day of Solemn Thanksgiving and Praise to God for His Goodness and Favor... (That) This whole people offer up our bodies and souls as a living and acceptable service unto God by Jesus Christ."

May I encourage you to read Psalm 100 at your family Thanksgiving Dinner? Next have each person present share for what they are most thankful, followed by joining hands and thanking God for all his blessings. Don't forget to hug and say, I love you! This will make this Thanksgiving huge at your house. Now you can do those things above and really be blessed.

October 13, 2005 marked my sixth month of ministry as Interim Pastor at First Christian Church of San Marcos. It has been a time of planning, meetings, preaching, visiting, and other related pastoral responsibilities. Moreover, it has been a time of grand fellowship, interesting dialogues, and mutual love for a God who has brought us together to revitalize His Work at First Christian Church.

Thanks are to God who continues to encourage us individually and collectively to be more like Him as we continue to plan and complete His Mission for First Christian.

Betsy and I will remember all of you in our prayers on Thanksgiving Day. Our Thanksgiving will be enhanced because you have made us feel a part of the First Christian fellowship. We Thank God for bringing us together!

Too often we underestimate the power of touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."
(Leo Buscaglia)

Miracles and Blessings,

James

Board Update

In our board meetings right after the split we might have 5 or 6 folks including myself. I was wondering how I ended up in this position and anxious about doing the right things to help the board and the church get back on track. Those were some gray days and evenings struggling to put things back together.

Contrast that to our October meeting. Chris Carson, Chair of the stewardship committee, and Charles Blankenship, Treasurer, presented a well thought out and detailed budget for 2006. The work in the budget was excellent making it an easy document to understand and approve. Thanks Chris, Charles, Kerry, and the Stewardship Committee.

Steve Thaler, Associate Pastor, communicates that we are making some changes in the beginning of the 10:30 worship. The choir will line up in the rear as they have in years past and proceed down the center aisle in song. Steve is also stepping up to the plate to fill the gap in our youth ministry, for the immediate future, when Andrew leaves in December. Thanks to Steve for being flexible and willing to serve where the need is greatest.

Kay Stroman, Personnel committee chairman, updates us on the progress she and her team are making on job descriptions, a congregational survey, staff needs and the pastor search. The pastor search is not a priority at this time. James is willing to stay beyond his one year contract so we are probably in the 2nd quarter of 2006 before rolling on this process. We are looking for a part time music director, bookkeeper, and backup organist. Many thanks to Kerry Rash for doing a lot of the heavy lifting in getting our books in order.

Billy Windham, board member, is working to get a new brochure to help us disseminate information about our services and beliefs here at FCC. Billy is trying many angles to ensure that the brochure is a quality product and done at the best cost. Thanks Billy.

Char Wood, Office Manager, let us know that we lost an amplifier in the sound system but we have one ordered. In the meantime Mike Wood brought one from his house to keep the system working until the new one arrives. Special thanks to Mike Wood.

A constitutional committee will meet three times before the November board meeting and is to have a refreshed constitution to recommend to the board.

A Vision committee is forming that will be charged with future planning for the direction of our church. Part of that would be identifying specific areas of ministry we want to be known for in the community. This will be an ongoing committee with at least one meeting between now and the end of the year.

We set the year-end congregational meeting date -- November 20th.

Brenda Damron will chair the nominating committee for Deacons, Elders, and Officers for 2006. Thanks Brenda. These are but a few examples of the good things happening at FCC.

God Bless This Church

Art

What's Going on with Staffing? Kay Stroman, Personnel Committee Chair

This year has been filled with staffing changes and I am pleased to announce a few more. Since Andrew Chapman announced his impending departure at the end of this year, the big question on many Youth and parent's minds has been, "Who will fill that role?" Andrew has done a wonderful job and I am pleased to say that Steve Thaler has agreed to take on this huge responsibility when Andrew leaves. Steve will also continue in his current role of Associate Minister, leading our Christian education activities and overseeing committee work, so anyone who has the desire to step up to the plate and assist Steve, just let him know. Steve brings many years of experience in youth ministry and we are looking forward to learning a few things from him about this ministry.

"The Hills are alive, with the Sound of Music..." We have officially begun the search for a part-time Music Director to carry on the wonderful volunteer work so far contributed by Mike Wood, Connie Burke and others since earlier this year – thank you Mike, Connie and everyone involved! The Music Director position will oversee all of our music ministries including the Chancel Choir, Bell Choir, contemporary music, children's choir, etc. If you know of someone who has a passion for Christian ministry through Music – rock to Bach, please let us know!

We are also officially seeking a part-time bookkeeper to assist our Treasurer, Charles Blankenship, in the tedious task of accounting for

our Church finances. We are very grateful to Kerry Rash for her many hours of volunteer time in shaping up this position for someone to smoothly carry it forward. Again, if you know of someone who has the skills and time (approximately 15 hours per week) to assist us in this important role, please let us know.



Last, but definitely not least, has anyone NOT seen Cecilia Pena at the helm of the Church organ? I think she's due a vacation! Cecilia has been our accompanist, but earlier this year assumed the responsibility of organist as well. We are seeking a back-up organist for Cecilia so that she can, in fact, take some time off when needed. Please let us know, or let Cecilia know, if you know of anyone who can assist her from time to time.

One final note, we are truly grateful to all of our volunteers who assisted us through a difficult transition period earlier this year, and who continue to help, asking nothing in return. I have mentioned a few in this update, but there are many, many more. My sincere thank you goes out to everyone who stepped up to the plate and hit a grand slam for FCC San Marcos!

Personnel Committee

Kay Stroman, Personnel Committee Chair



We now have an active and engaging personnel committee with a very full plate. I'd like to thank the following FCC members for volunteering their time

to serve on this important committee:

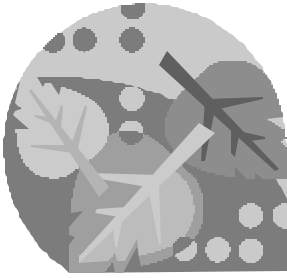
Bill Damron
Robert Herndon
Joann Schlotter
Art Johnson

The purpose of the committee is to provide for consistency in personnel administration and a healthy working environment for all church staff and church volunteers, through oversight and assessment of

the church's personnel policies, practices and staff/parish relations. In keeping with the purpose as set forth, we have been finalizing job descriptions for all staff positions, so they know what is expected, and we have begun work on a Church satisfaction survey to be conducted during the Annual Meeting in November. The survey is an important tool for assessing the overall health of the Church and ensuring continuous improvement in our ministry efforts. We will continue to improve upon and use this tool in the future.

The Personnel Committee is here to serve all staff and members alike. Accordingly, please do not hesitate to track down one of us if you have something to share. Peace!

WELL DONE MY GOOD AND FAITHFULL FRIENDS!



Fall Festival 2005, was a huge success. God blessed us all by allowing us the beautiful weather and great attendance.

With all the Fall Decorations, once again provided by Mary Skidmore, the mood was set, and cheerful it was!. Thank you Mary.

The food was incredible as usual with Robert Pruett, Rocky Stone and crew to thank for the preparation. We know we fed over 300 people.

The Craft and Gift Shoppe was a wonderland to walk through with lots of wonderful displays to look at and purchase. I know they did a superb job on their part too. Thank you Connie and Donna.

The Silent Auction had numerous wonderful items to bid on, and I even found a few too tempting not to pass on. They also had a great response to it and did a great job on bringing in their share of the contributions. Thank you Lenore for a great job.

The Sweet Shoppe had lots of great goodies, and sold out as usual. The sausage wraps were a great addition. Thank you Cindy.

Thank you Kira for heading up the Frozen Casseroles, I know all that bought them will enjoy them.

The Children's Activities wouldn't have happened if it weren't for the incredible job by Rita. She found lots of great items for the kids to purchase with their tickets, earned by playing fun games. The hay ride also looked like fun, and I heard lots of great things about it. It was a combined effort to get that accomplished.

Caddo did his usual great job and squeezed out extra amounts from bidders on the wonderful items we had; and we had some great items, thanks to Rick's solicitations and

contributions. We also want to thank Caddo's crew. They kept everything documented and organized.



Our set up and take down crew were so helpful, and I know Patrick was doing double duty helping with the food too. Thank you Patrick.

Mike Wood was a great help with his announcements and "mood " music. Char was helping everywhere she could. Thanks guys, you always seem to be there when we need you.

Charles and Max, were great at what they do best, "money", and they greeted everyone with a smile. We can always count on them,

Kay, you did an outstanding job at advertising, and even though the banner was up only one week, it is a beautiful banner which will be used over and over for a long time.

Thank you to all of our other committee members. We couldn't have done it without all of your co-operation and hard work.

I know everyone did what they could, and then some. Thank you for being such great leaders. I hope I haven't forgotten anyone because you all mean very much to us in all you did.

We also want to thank all the people who donated time and items for the Craft and Gift Shoppe, frozen casseroles, Sweet Shoppe, silent and live auctions, BBQ, and kid's activities. You helped out so much.

Thank you for having the confidence in us, and making the Fall Festival 2005 the best yet.

In Christ's Love

Mary Wasson, and Susan Ballard

Fall Festival 2005 Co-Chairpersons



A Great Big Thank You!!

We would like to thank all the people involved in making the Fall Festival such a success. Many worked hard to prepare, give of their time and money for community outreach. It was a lot of fun and we thank you all.

Elders of FCC



FCC Meals on Wheels Crew Rolls Again!

Our faithful FCC Meals on Wheels team will be rolling into action again this month. The team will be delivering meals to those in need November 14-18. What a wonderful service they provide to our community! Thanks team!

An Opportunity for FCC Fellowship with Hurricane Evacuees.....



FCC has been asked to provide an **evening meal** on **Thursday, November 10** for approximately **100** hurricane evacuees. These people are meeting once a week in order to share a meal and fellowship as they transition to living in their "new" community. A member has volunteered to provide fried chicken but we need the following:

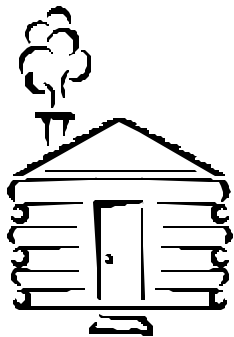
- Vegetable side dishes
- Potato Salads
- Green Salads
- Desserts
- Breads

Please let me know if you'll be able to help with this. Call the church office at 396-1926.

Thanks,
Jeanne McCaffrey

Youth Happenings

Hey young'ns! This fall has been wonderful so far! Thanks to everyone for being involved and making everything happen. D-groups will still be going strong this month. If you haven't stopped by for one of our weekly meetings yet, do come! I hope everyone can be involved. Middle schoolers gather on Wednesdays from 6:15-7:15, and high schoolers on Sundays from 5:30-7:00. The Fall Rally is the only major event planned for the month of November. For all high schoolers who sign up, meet at



church at 6:00 on Friday the 11th. We'll be back around lunch on Sunday. For more information, give me a call. I'm looking forward to another great month with everyone.

Blessings, Andrew

Wanted

Stationary bicycle, regular or recumbent style. Contact Dawn Jester via the church office. Thanks!

FCC Supports

Christian Women's Job Corps



This year the Christian Women's Job Corps has only four students. Three of these students want to be certified as Teacher's Aides. To qualify, a candidate must have 48 hours of College credit or attend a three day course sponsored by the Texas Education Agency. The course cost \$200.00 per student. Through our Fall Festival and contributions of our Church family, we are sponsoring two of the ladies. Through our contributions and their studies, the ladies can lift themselves out of welfare and become productive citizens.

On a side note to the article above, in addition to contributions from church members, we also have members who donate their time to teach classes for CWJC sessions, and we prepared lunches during one week of their classes.

Family Advent Wreath Making & Bon Fire



We will be preparing for Advent on **Wednesday, November 16th** by making Advent Wreaths for our families. All supplies will be provided and we will begin after dinner.

In order to be sure we have enough kits for all the families, please let Steve or the church office know you're planning to come. Afterward, we will be joining the Psalm kids for a Church wide Bon Fire and S'more making time. Thanks to Michael Doss for agreeing to set us up to burn safely. If you have some scrap wood that will burn cleanly, feel free to bring it to the church and place it in the back by the fire ring. We'll be using it for our bon fire.



Dear Church Family,

You give such love and support the body and soul thrives.

Thank you so much for all the good food, calls, visits, cards and most of all thoughts and prayers.

The quilt, oh the quilt, it is beautiful and I love it!

Love to all,

Margie & Don Harmon

Kidz Korner

Information from the children's Ministry Team

Adventureland SS Update



We're already in our third month of learning about some exiting stories in the Bible. First we experienced the story of Noah with our kindergarten through fifth grade kids. They cooked up Pita arks and talked about God providing for Noah, his family and all the animals. They learned that Noah obeyed God's instructions and that God made a special covenant with Noah and all living things. The children played a rainbow hunt game and painted a cooperative canvas which was a lot of fun.

Secondly you can ask any of our youngsters about Sarah and Abraham. They have all made puppets and acted out the story, tasted goat milk, dried figs and other foods that were eaten in those days. They also looked at a map of the journey Abraham and Sarah took and made sandals to get a feel for the level of discomfort they had to endure on their trip.

Right now we are exploring the story of Joseph. In our gathering time before we split up into age groups, "Joseph" (Tyler Stone) came to visit us and talked about his strange dreams and about his brothers who are jealous of him.

All these experiences will hopefully help our children to grow in their knowledge and spiritual life. Not only is the curriculum a lot of fun but everybody who has volunteered to teach or be a shepherd has enriched the children with their input, enthusiasm and love.

Thanks to everyone who has helped so far!!!!

If anyone would like to help in the coming months or in the spring, please let Cindy Casparis know. She has the sign-up list.

The more people the better!

P.S. We have begun to practice the songs for the Christmas Pageant, so if your child would like to participate in this have them come to Sunday School.

Psalm Kids



Our new Wednesday evening Children's worship program is off to a GREAT start. We have approximately 14 children regularly participating each week. Each week is a new lesson and it's never too late to come join us.

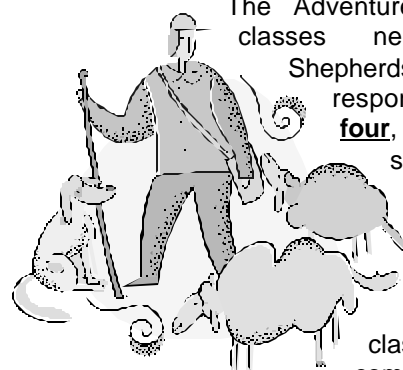
We are working each week to learn about different characters in the Old Testament, led by our faithful Shepherds, Teri Stapp, Brigid Elias and Katie Carson. Our music time is led each week by Maggie Mossler.

Many of our wonderful parents have given their time to lead our weekly lesson activities such as trust walks, measuring out Noah's Ark, scavenger hunts, making sling shots and building edible temple's of gold.

We are also in the midst of a mission project that we'd love everyone's help with. There is a box in the Narthex for canned goods that will be given to the San Marcos Food bank the week before Thanksgiving. If you have canned goods you can donate, we'd greatly appreciate your help.

Lastly, beginning the week after Thanksgiving, we will be spending all our time working on the Christmas program and would like all kids wanting to participate to come join us.

Adventureland Teachers and Shepherds needed



The Adventureland Sunday School classes need Teachers and Shepherds. A teacher's responsibility is to teach **four, that's 4 Sundays**. A shepherd's duty is to assist that teacher by making sure the kiddos stay on task, and making sure that kids that may leave the classroom for a drink come back, etc.....All of the curriculum is prepared for each teacher and given to her/him a week or 2 before their time starts. With the changes in our church structure it has been a challenge to get teachers and shepherds. This is not only for the parents of Sunday School age children but also for our more mature members to take part in; what a great way to get to know the youth of our church! If you can help please contact Cindy Casparis at 353-1017 or kellyandcindy@grandecom.net

ATTENTION WOMEN OF FAITH!!!!



I just received a postcard about the 2006 theme for Women of Faith for 2006. It is "CONTAGIOUS JOY". Since we have many new women members in our FCC family, I wanted to offer to be a group leader if you are interested in attending this conference. There will be one in Houston April 7-8, 2006, at the Toyota Center. They will not have the hosting hotel information until later. As group leader, I would be responsible for getting that information and passing it on, collecting the names, money; getting tickets, helping arrange transportation (carpool) and general organization for this event. Some of you may never have attended this type of conference--it is an inspiring, uplifting, praise through song and lecture-type speakers, as well as drama. You will enjoy the fellowship of women from all over the nation. Contact me, Dawn Jester, at 396-3065 (VM) or 393-1205 (cell) to sign up. Women of Faith has a website for more information: www.womenoffaith.com

MIKE'S MUSIC NOTES ??



Anyone who would like to sing in the Christmas Cantata, rehearsals have begun. Come out on Wednesday evenings from 7:15 to 8:30 and enjoy the fun, fellowship and camaraderie with your friends in the choir. The Cantata will be performed on Sunday, December 18th at the 10:30 AM service.

The Doss family would like to thank the ladies of First Christian Church for the special quilt sent for Parker Malone, born on July 24th of this

Merci

year. It is so beautiful, and it is a wonderful daily reminder of how blessed our family is to be a part of such a lovely church and its people. Thank you, also, for the single red rose, and the visit by James McKibbin. We have thanked God everyday for our boys, Cooper and Parker, and we thank all of you for being a part of our family as well.

For Sale: Small and large TY Beanie Babies in excellent condition! Small - \$2.50; Large - \$5.00. Make perfect friend-to-friend school gifts or "Secret Santa" gifts. These are like the ones sold in Santa Shop at Fall Festival. Contact Dawn Jester at 512-396-3065.

Help Wanted

Office help needed Mondays and Thursdays. If you would like to make volunteer office work a part of your ministry at First Christian Church, please call Char. If another day works better for you, let's talk about it.



**Welcome to our newest
FCC Members!**
Please add this information
to your directory

Gary & Kim Campbell

(foster care men – JB Dublin, David Hiles and Lee Southwell)

Joined October 2, 2005

Gloria Wilson

Joined October 2, 2005

Phillip Rodriguez

Joined October 23, 2005

Louis & Mary Olenick

(children Alexandria and Jeremy)

Joined October 23, 2005

A special THANK YOU to all who helped out with the church work day! You are appreciated!

"First News"

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First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
3105 Ranch Road 12, San Marcos, TX 78666

512-396-1926

FAX 512-393-3496

Church Staff:

James A. McKibbin, MA/M.Div, PSY/D _____ Interim Senior Minister

Steven Thaler, M.Div. _____ Associate Minister

Andrew Chapman _____ Youth Director

Char Wood _____ Office Manager

Charles Blankenship _____ Treasurer

Mike Wood _____ Interim Chancel Choir Director

Connie Burke _____ Handbell Director

Margaret Jordan _____ Contemporary Music Coordinator

Mabel Hall _____ Pianist

Cecilia Pena _____ Organist / Accompanist

Rosie Smith _____ Nursery Supervisor

Lola Bell _____ Nursery Caregiver

Jennifer Flores _____ Nursery Caregiver

Fred Villanueva _____ Groundskeeper

November Lectionary Readings & Liturgical Color

Sunday, November 6

25th Sunday after Pentecost

Green

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

Psalm 78:1-7

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Matthew 25:1-13

Sunday, November 13

26th Sunday after Pentecost

Green

Judges 4:1-7

Psalm 123

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:14-30

Sunday, November 20

Thanksgiving Sunday

27th Sunday after Pentecost

Green

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Psalm 100

Ephesians 1:15-23

Matthew 25:31-46

Sunday, November 27

1st Sunday of Advent

Violet

Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37