



The Norman Christian

First Christian Church 220 S. Webster, Norman, Oklahoma 73069 405/329-2192

www.fccnorman.org

April 16, 2024

Vol. 83, Number 16

FROM DAVID'S DESK...

Last Monday, April 8th was one of those days for which words can only point, but never fully describe the experience. Our trip to Waco served two purposes—to finalize my father's estate disbursement, and to watch the solar eclipse, with Waco being in the path of totality.

We met early in the workday with my father's banker, as the bank would be closing for the eclipse. What might have been an otherwise business-like appointment became a rich moment of gratitude and connections. Ramon (my father's beloved and trusted bank officer) told some wonderful stories of his conversations with my father. After several stories, I started to express my gratitude for the kindness and care he and the bank in Waco had given assisting in my father's financial affairs. However, as I started to say thank you, a deep well of tears sprang up and I could only bow my head for a moment. Ramon was wonderful—he didn't say a word, he simply sat quietly. I admitted I had not anticipated that well of emotion, but it no doubt was rooted in Ramon's care for my father, and the influence my father had made on Ramon. After that moment of welled up emotion, we put together that Ramon and our middle daughter had been at the same high school at the same time, that they knew each other, and that another bank officer who joined in the conversation had lived one street over from where we lived in Waco and one of his brothers had played on our son's Little League baseball team. The connections ran deep and long, and while in one sense what we were doing was closing a significant chapter in our lives in Waco, we were reminded that there are always connections that remain, relationships that endure, lights that still reflect into the future. In the midst of taking care of 'personal business,' we were reminded of the communal reality of our living, which makes sense because my father banked at Community Bank and Trust.

A couple of hours later, Pam and I parked our car in a very large parking lot to witness the total eclipse. We were two of no more than 20 people who chose that spot on the top of a hill for viewing. The forecast was not promising, and the clouds would come and go. About 5 minutes before totality, a very large cloud obscured the sun, and we were afraid we would miss seeing the main event. However, just before totality began the cloud moved, and for more than 4 minutes we were part of a cosmic event (I know we are part of a cosmic event every moment, but we were mindful of this reality in a unique way). With totality, the birds 'hushed their singing,' the parking lot lights came on, the temperature dropped a bit, and Venus and Jupiter became visible. Most remarkably, with the sun totally obscured by the moon, we could view

the sun's corona and a couple of orange flares on the lower right side of the sun. While it was never completely dark (there was light along the horizon as the moon passed in front of the sun), the colors of an eclipse—both in the sky and on the land—differ from the shades of sunrise and sunset.

I would not say that experiencing the solar eclipse was a life-changing moment for me; however, I was profoundly aware of being part of something deeply personal in the morning and magnificently cosmic in the early afternoon. There was much to consider—life, death, the heavens in their courses, the presence of God through all of it—and for the second time that day, when I started to say something to Pam, a deep well of tears emerged and the silence of unspoken awe seemed most appropriate.

Perhaps if one observation can be made of both experiences last Monday it is this. Even when the sun was completely covered by the moon, light in the form of the sun's corona shone magnificently. Not even the complete covering of the source of light prevented the light from shining, albeit in a way I had never seen before. Once I could talk again, I simply shared with Pam what the writer of the gospel of John once wrote—"the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." I think that truth applied to both the morning and the afternoon, and its truth carries us all through the night.

With Awe and Gratitude,

David

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Eastertide

8:40 a.m. Worship

9:00/9:30 a.m. Church School

10:45 a.m. Worship

*Worship will also be livestreamed
at 10:45 a.m.*

Scripture: Psalm 23 & John 10: 11-18

Sermon: *Shepherd Care*

Worship & Wonder: *Jesus is Risen:
The Road to Emmaus*

*Vespers Worship
Monday at 5:15 p.m.—Chapel*

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS



We celebrate with the **Thompson** family who joined by transfer of membership, as well as baptism on Sunday, April 7th! **Blake**, who was baptized along with his mother **Kelli**, has been visiting the church since last Fall. Blake is a sophomore at OCCC and looks forward to continuing his schooling at OU, working toward his degree in architecture. Blake enjoys spending time with friends and family, as well as working out, mixed martial arts, and hiking. **Kelli**, along with husband **Ben**, began visiting in the Fall also. Kelli works for Cain, Cain, and Janik as a settlement coordinator, where she has worked for 7 years. **Ben**, who joined by transfer of membership, recently began a commercial construction company called Thompson General Contracting. The family enjoys spending time with each other and travelling to Pagosa Springs, Colorado where they will soon be constructing a cabin! The Thompson family lives at 12800 East Post Oak Road in Noble, 73068 and their phone number is 405-412-3379.

Debi Thompson, Ben's mother and Blake's grandmother joined by transfer of membership as well. Debi began visiting along with Blake. Debi is a counselor in private practice for individual and family counseling. Debi was married for 43 years to her husband Steve, who died in 2019. Debi enjoys spending time with her grandchildren, as well as swimming and reading. Debi lives at 1301 Dustin Drive in Norman, 73071 and her phone number is 405-882-4000. Be sure to extend a warm welcome to the Thompson family!

NEW CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

It is time to say, "CHEESE"! First Christian Church is partnering with Grace Pictorial Directories to create a new church directory. Grace Pictorial Directories will take all of our photos at the church and publish the directory for us.

A complimentary 8x10 photo will be provided. You will be able to view and order additional portraits during your professional photo session appointment. Ordering additional portraits is not required and is completely optional.

The photo session dates are May 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 28th, May 29th. All time slots are Central Standard Time (CST).

In the spirit of protecting sensitive personal information printed in the pictorial directory, there will be no information printed or accessible online. No personal information will be accessible, posted, or available online.

Please use the link below to sign-up for your professional photo session or scan the QR code with your camera on your device. Thank you!

<https://fcc.link/PicDirectory>



IN THE CHURCH FAMILY...

Margaret Herren is in Norman Regional HealthPlex.

EASTER OFFERING UPDATE AND THANK YOU



The Easter Offering supports several of the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Your gift supports college students in leadership development programs, global mission partners, health and social service ministries, the formation of new congregations, support for pastors and chaplains, and so much more.

Your gifts totaling \$6,469 represent the influence to change lives around the world. Thank you!

OFFICE REMODEL UPDATE

The dry wall is up, the electrical work has been mostly completed, and now we move into painting, finishing and installation of cabinetry, followed by laying carpets and a few adjustments to the foyer area. Hopefully, we are only a couple of weeks away from having this renovation completed!

All of these improvements are possible because of the generous support of the congregation for the Capital Campaign. Thank you!

SANCTUARY HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING UPDATE

Starting Monday, April 15th, workers began removing the old heating and air-conditioning units for the sanctuary. This will mean we will be without heat or air conditioning for the following two Wednesday choir rehearsals, and for at least one Sunday (April 21st) but hopefully not for a second Sunday (April 28th). Good news about the weather forecast for April 21st—cool but not cold; in other words, just right! The new units (besides being new) will be much more energy efficient and much more effective. We are grateful to the members of the Property Committee for their diligent work in planning for this work.

Most importantly, this project of replacing the nearly 20 year old units is made possible by your generous and ongoing support of the Capital Campaign projects...thank you very much!

BOOKS TO DONATE

The lending libraries we established at Food and Shelter and at A Friend's House (the warming shelter at Food and Shelter) have been a great success! In the past year, First Christian has donated and recycled hundreds of books through these charities. Again, our supply of books for men, women, and children is running low. If you have books to donate (paperbacks are preferred by the recipients but we will take anything), you are welcome to bring them to the church office or call Marilyn Saunders at 405-206-2026 and she will arrange to pick up the books. Thank you so very much for your response to this project!

YOUTH GROUP

Check the youth list email, Facebook, GroupMe, and the iMessage group text for meeting information. Please contact Shannon if you have any questions!

Chi Rho is for youth in 6th-8th grades and CYF is for youth in 9th-12th grades.

All Chi Rho and CYF youth are welcome to join us for any and all events, and friends are always welcome!

April 17—Chi Rho will enjoy the annual picnic and party with Logos, including games, fun, and snacks! CYF will celebrate an amazing Youth Sunday with a movie night.

April 24—Chi Rho youth will attend the Logos banquet and welcome the fifth graders into Chi Rho. CYF will welcome a speaker from the Oklahoma Faith Network for interactive activities and conversation around substance abuse/awareness!

May 1—Service project for Church World Service assembling school kits!

May 8—GAME NIGHT!!!

May 15—We will talk about ways to relieve and manage stress as the school year comes to an end.

Sunday, May 19—Senior Breakfast—we will honor our high school seniors in the Fellowship Hall, 9:30-10:30 a.m. All Chi Rho and CYF youth are welcome to join us during the Sunday school hour for this special Sunday!

YOUTH SUNDAY THANKS!



Many, many thanks to the youth and adults who worked together to make Youth Sunday 2024, The Eras, a wonderful day! It was truly a remarkable morning of worship and we are tremendously grateful that these fantastic youth are part of our congregation!

We offer immense thanks to the adults that helped the youth prepare every part of the service and on the day of the service: Ginna Bradshaw, Jenifer Buyten, Bart Hanna, Amanda Harvey, Christine Hrubik, Jenna Laird, Candace McGinnis, Stacy Minnick, John Riester, Sara Riester, Lexi Thompson, Melissa Wood.

Thank you to those who provided food for the youth and adults between services: Ginna Bradshaw, Steve and Janet Curtis, Ann and Kent Faison, Cheryl Hollingsworth, Lisa Lawter, and Rachel Spannagle.

Those youth who participated are: Addison Bodenhamer, Elise Buyten, Sophie Chancellor, Zach Chancellor, Harry Clinton, Cassidy Cook, Ella Corrick, Colton Culbertson, Hannah Douglas, Luke Douglas, Miles Duprez, Lark Feille, Juliana Gifford, Hannah Ingels, Maggie Jablonski, Marianna Jablonski, Grant Johnson, Reid Johnson, James Lawler, Ryan Lawler, Ben Lawson, Stella Lawson, Bennett Lyda, Mason Marriott, Mykala McKinzie, Josh Riester, Joy Riester, Caleb Sterling, Henry Stoops, Sophie Stoops, Allyah Tribble, Sutton Willis, and Ellie Wood.

ChARM ADVENTURES

Friday, April 26 – 8:00 a.m. – Breakfast at *Boomerang* at 1100 E. Constitution Street in Norman.

Monday, April 29 – Noon – 5th Monday Potluck luncheon in Fellowship Hall. Our speaker will be **Brian A. Britt**, Director of the *Pride of Oklahoma Marching Band*!

Thursday, May 9 – 10:00 a.m. – ChARM July – December 2024 planning meeting. If you are not available for the meeting but have ideas for ChARM adventures, please let Stephanie know.

Wednesday, May 15 – 10:45 a.m. – ChARM will travel to Yukon for lunch at Bad Brad's BBQ followed by a tour of the Express Clydesdales Barn. The tour is limited to 30 people. Please call the church office if you have any questions or would like to reserve your spot.

NEWS FROM DISCIPLES OF CHRIST WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Coming on June 28-29 is R.O.S.E.S. Growing in God's Fragrant Beauty, an inter-regional Disciples Women event which is being held in McKinney, Texas. This exciting event invites you to immerse yourself in the divine fragrance of God's love and grace, and explore the beauty of growth, transformation, and empowerment. If you are interested, registration and details are online at CCSW.org. The meeting will be at the First Christian Church in McKinney. Rev. Dr. Debra Reid, Rev. Marilyn Fiddmont, and Rev. Hupp will be the speakers. Contact Melinda Barrett if you would like to attend.

ALL CHURCH LUNCH ON APRIL 28TH

Mark your calendars for our all church lunch on Sunday, April 28th at noon in the Fellowship Hall. In addition to a wonderful meal—look for the menu next week—we shall also hear about the many wonderful outreach ministries supported by our church family. We look forward to seeing you for church school, worship, and lunch on the 28th!

CATHERINE'S BOOK CLUB

The next gathering of Catherine's Sunday afternoon book club will be Sunday, April 28th at 4:00 p.m.. The book to be read and discussed will be *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. Book Club will meet in the narthex outside of the Study & Share Classroom.

QUEST FOR FAITH PODCAST

Phil Nelson, our on-call church audio/visual expert, will be our guest. Phil will be discussing our present audio/visual ministry offerings, and our hopes and dreams for future improvements. Phil volunteers for the church and we are grateful for his time and talents. Phil continues to support the church while guiding FCC within the always changing audio/visual frontier. Thank you Phil!

Here are some ways to listen: with podcast apps on iPhone, iPad, and Android devices, on Alexa smart speakers by saying "Alexa, play Quest for Faith podcast", on Google smart speakers by saying "Hey Google, play Quest for Faith podcast", with a browser at <https://questfor.faith> (click Play in the upper left corner).

Church Calendar

April 17, 2024– Wednesday

2:45 p.m. Logos
4:00 p.m. Chi Rho (6th-8th Grade)
6:30 p.m. Youth Meal
7:15 p.m. CYF (9th– 12th Grade)
7:30 p.m. Choir

April 19, 2024– Friday

No NPS/MDO

April 21, 2024– Sunday

8:40 a.m. Worship
9:00/9:30 a.m. Church School
10:45 a.m. Worship
12:00 p.m. Social Media Safety Event
5:30 p.m. Nancy Chess– Parlor

April 22, 2024– Monday

5:15 p.m. Vespers
6:30 p.m. Handbells

April 23, 2024– Tuesday

8:30 a.m. DoCWM to CADW

WORSHIP PODCAST

The morning prayer, anthem, scripture, and sermon are now available each week in podcast form. Simply search Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, or Spotify for “First Christian Church of Norman.” You can also listen right in your browser at podcast.fccnorman.org.

STYROFOAM RECYCLING

In 2019, a coalition of local churches called “Churches Caring for Creation,” decided to work together to develop a program with the goal of safely recycling #6 plastic (Styrofoam). First Christian joined the group. We collected Styrofoam at the church and when a load was collected someone drove it to Ada where there was a collection station. During the pandemic the Ada station closed.

University Lutheran Church at 914 Elm has a “Styro-Station” where foam can be dropped off. Access is from their church parking lot located on College, behind the church. Hours are Monday–Friday from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. A drop box is available outside the door if the church is closed.

Styrofoam items are marked with a number 6 in a triangle and PS underneath. It will snap in two when bent. If it bends or has no 6 on it, it is not Styrofoam. All Styrofoam must be very clean to be recycled and all paper and tape must be removed. All food must be removed before recycling. Washing in soapy water will remove any grease and food stains are OK. Keep egg cartons whole as they are given to a family with a poultry farm.



VOYAGE INTO DISCIPLESHIP

Voyage Into Discipleship gathers for all children ages Kindergarten through 5th grade. This Sunday we will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:30am for Extreme Animals as we celebrate Earth Day!!

LOGOS

Logos is in for a special treat this Wednesday, April 17th. We will pick up from schools as we always do and come to the church to enjoy snacks, recreation, opening circle and singing. After that, we will enjoy our picnic night, as we will **stay on the church grounds this year** and enjoy fun, games, and food. It will be great time for everyone...see you Wednesday!

ACCESSING LIVESTREAM WORSHIP

Sunday 10:45 worship will be livestreamed so you can watch or listen from your computer, tablet, or smartphone. Simply search Facebook for “First Christian Church of Norman” or, if you aren’t on Facebook, point your browser to <http://live.fccnorman.org> for links to stream on YouTube and other social media platforms. If you are not able to watch live, the video will be available for later viewing. To access the church homepage please visit <http://fccnorman.org>.

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF FOOD AND SHELTER

The Champions of Change fund raising dinner, hosted by Benvenuti’s, will take place on April 18th, 6:00 p.m., in The Studio of the Sooner Theatre. Your \$100.00 contribution includes dinner, drinks, and dessert and goes to support struggling people in our community. **NOTE: Two tables have been donated and need people to fill the seats. Whether as a donor or an attendee, you may call April: 405-360-4954 or by using the link: foodandshelterinc.org.**

HYMNS FOR SUNDAY

For the Beauty of the Earth (56)

God Is My Shepherd (79)

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us (558)

Sunday Worship will be both video and audio
livestreamed at 10:45 in the morning