

The Messenger



August 24, 2016

Moment's Reflection

"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you."
-Ephesians 4:32



"In the confines of church and school he learned the truths to which the town pretended or aspired. In the countenances and characters of his teachers, in long back yard rambles home from school, in Saturday afternoon adventures in alleys and outskirts and along the river, he learned how the truths fared in daily life." -**The Memory of Old Jack**, Wendell Berry

I'm slowly working my way through Wendell Berry's great collection of novels about the people of Port William. Lately, I've been reading Berry's novel, *The Memory of Old Jack*. Beginning in 1952, Old Jack Beechum recalls his life. Among those memories is a tender, heart-rending recollection of his great-nephew Andy Catlett who grows up on his father's tobacco farm but then one day sets off to begin his own life. Everyone in the story knows that Andy probably won't ever come back to live the life his mother and dad have. And while there's some sadness to that, there's also, as Berry tells it, happiness that a fine young man with a good mind is going off to college to do what he is gifted to do.

The night before he leaves, Andy remembers something peculiar about his life in Port William. He remembers the truths *"to which the town pretended or aspired,"* but he also recalls all the others times of daily living when *"he learned how the truths fared in daily life."* Through Andy's story, Berry describes the general predicament in which all we Christians live: we struggle our whole lives to live what we know to be true.

My New Testament teacher, William Baird, put the predicament in theological terms saying that most of Scripture is a tug of war between the great indicatives of God and Christ (what is true because of God) and the great imperatives (what we're called to do because of God's great indicatives). One of God's great indicatives, for instance, is that God has forgiven us. One of the great imperatives based on that indicative is that we're to practice forgiveness with each other (Ephesians 4:32). If you've spent any serious time in the Christian community, you know just how difficult that struggle is. Even if Christ forgives us, we still spend our whole lives learning how to treat others the way God treats us.

I bring all this up because it suggests a point of grace we often overlook in the daily struggle of life. As Christians we're not asked to prove, much less earn, the truth of God's great indicatives. We're forgiven, we're saved, we're children of God. In God's great mercy, those truths are non-negotiable. Even if we mess up. Even if, as Andy Catlett remembers, we hear one thing on Sunday morning and act like another on Saturday night, God's truth prevails. The challenge of the Christian faith, a challenge immersed in God's great grace, is to do our best to become the people we already are.

-Dan, Pentecost 2016

A Letter from Rev. Allison Drake . . .

August 18, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I write to you with a full heart to share the news of my resignation as Minister to Children, Youth, and Young Adults at First Christian Church in Garland. I have been called as the Children and Youth Director at East Dallas Christian Church. I will begin my ministry there in October. My last day with you will be Sunday, September 18th, 2016.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your pastor and I am deeply grateful for the ways you have embraced me and supported my leadership. You have welcomed me into your homes and families and trusted me with the tender moments of life. Together we have laughed and prayed, worshipped and served. I love this church and its people. I say “full heart” because I am sad to be leaving you, even as I trust that God is calling me in a new direction.

I am aware that this news may come as a surprise; it was unexpected for me too. There are times in our lives when God’s direction and call is too strong to ignore. Even though East Dallas has a long history, they have decided to move forward as if they are a new church plant and explore all the dreams God has laid out for them. They are saying yes to a vision that only God knows and part of that is hiring a full-time Children and Youth Director to build and grow their ministry. As I reflect on my life, there are many times when I have sensed God calling me to something unexpected or unplanned and those changes have always been blessings.

In believing that God is guiding me in this call, I also believe God is guiding you through this process. You are a faithful, caring, dedicated congregation and I have full faith that First Christian Church will continue to grow in its faith and service in Garland and the surrounding suburbs. From now until September 18th, I will continue to pastor this church and its children as faithfully as I have until this point, and will engage fully in the good and important ministry we have yet to do together and the hard but grace filled process of saying good-bye.

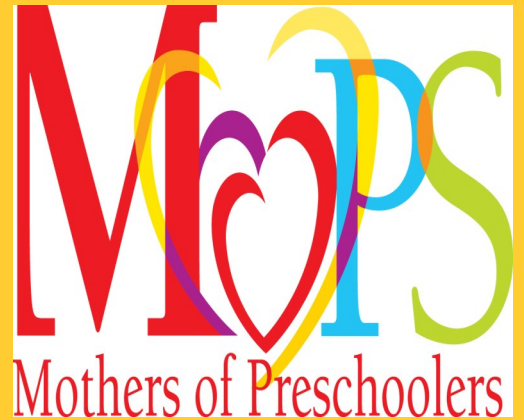
Faithfully,

Rev. Allison Drake

Families and Professionals Activities — Fall Kick-Offs

Did you know kids ask an average of 300 questions per day? We do too! Come chat with us about it at MOPS.

Mothers of Preschoolers is all about connecting with other moms who are in the same phase of life as you, building relationships and celebrating the gift of motherhood. MOPS is hosted at FCCG on Sunday evenings where dinner and childcare are provided. We meet for fellowship, discussion, speakers and crafts. MOPS is a place for real relationships, support and love. All moms are welcome to join us for any meeting!

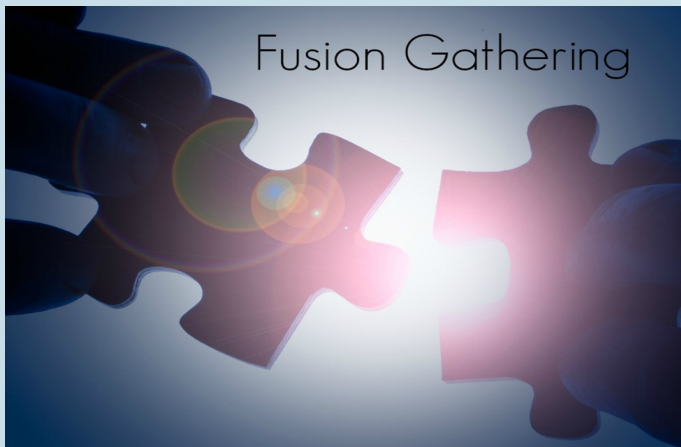


KICK-OFF: Sunday, September 11th at 5pm (at the church)

For more information or to RSVP, contact Rev. Casey: casey@fccgarland.org

FUSION: *a merging of spirituality into real everyday life*

The basic purpose of Fusion is to provide space and time to consistently connect with one another and God. Its goal is to help “fuse” (meld, unite, weave) our faith and spirituality into all aspects of our lives.



This Fall, Fusion will develop into a small group ministry to nurture deeper connections in an authentic and comfortable way. In an effort to meet people where they are, Fusion will be hosted in homes at whatever day and time is most convenient for each individual small group. Groups are encouraged to commit to gathering on a regular basis to promote accountability and ongoing support of one another. Most gatherings will involve sharing a meal, yet, these meals will be kept simple and low stress. The core group of adults should not grow larger than about 12-14 people (6-7 couples). New groups will be formed as needed.

It should be a time for adults and children alike to spend time sharing life and prayer. Children are welcome to attend and will be encouraged to play with their friends in an adjacent room after dinner.

In keeping with the “low stress” theme, the format of the gatherings will be casual and free-flowing. The focus is not on accomplishing a set agenda or engaging in an extensive bible study, rather emphasis will be placed on being present and engaged.

If you are interested in joining a Fusion small group or hosting one of these small groups contact Rev. Casey at casey@fccgarland.org.

FUSION Kick-Off: Friday, September 16th at 6:30pm—at the Henderson Home

FCCG YOUTH ACTIVITIES — FALL KICK-OFFS



Youth Kick-Off Party on August 28th

Meet at **Westlake Skating Rink** after Sunday School. Pizza will be provided!

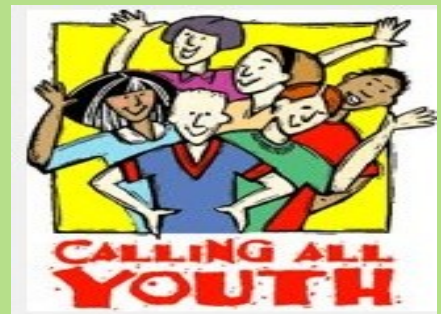
Parental pick-up at 1pm. K-12 invited, and parents of K-2 encouraged to stay.

Wednesday Evening Youth Bible Study

begins September 7th, 6:30-8pm (location TBD).

Sunday Evening Youth Activities

begin September 11th, 5-7pm, at the church.

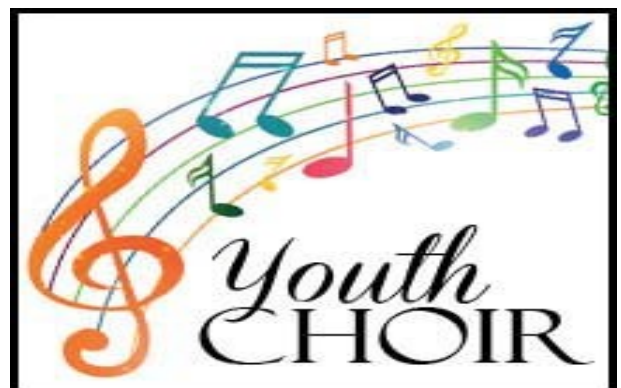


CHILDREN'S CHOIR (4 yrs-3rd grade)

Rehearsals begin on Sunday, September 11th, 5:30pm-7:00pm. Contact Tammy Holcomb for more information.

YOUTH CHOIR (3rd grade and up)

Rehearsals begin on Sunday, September 18th, 4:00pm-4:50pm. Contact Judy Grasham for more information.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Cup of Life

Monica Pesina & Ralph
Pat Spradley

Fishers of Families

Mike Whalin

God's Messengers

Joanne Terry

Shepherds

Lee MacDonald

The Grapevine

Joyce Witt Boyd
Bettye Davenport



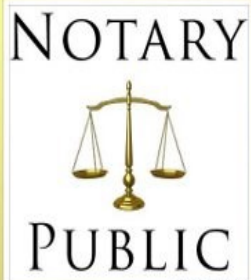
The Avenue A door will remain locked during the worship service and Sunday school. You may access the Avenue A door using the keypad (call the church office if you need the code for the keypad), or you may use the main Sanctuary doors on Glenbrook.



**PASTORAL CONCERNS
PHONE NUMBER**

469-573-1717

A dedicated phone number for use in contacting a minister with your pastoral concerns.



**Notary Public
Services**

Notary Public services are now available at FCCG. If you need a notary, please contact the church office.

**Southwest Regional
Assembly**

October 29-30, 2016 at
Northway Christian Church,
Dallas



"Faith WITH Works is ALIVE!"

Register online at — <http://ccsw.org/ra2016/>



Church Office Hours

Please note, the Church Office will be closed on Monday, September 5th, in observance of the Labor Day holiday.



**FCCG DWM
KICK-OFF MEETING**

Saturday, August 27th, 10am at FCCG

Contact Cindy Kyle about childcare

**First Christian Church Garland
115 S. Glenbrook
Garland, TX 75040**

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**A Publication of First Christian Church
Disciples of Christ**