

The Messenger

December 16, 2015



Advent
Hope · Love · Joy · Peace



Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20th

*Rev. Ray Owens' Retirement
Reception at 3pm in Fellowship Hall*

Christmas Eve Services—December 24th
at 6pm and 11pm

*Hot Wassail will be served in the
narthex at both services*

MOMENT'S REFLECTION

"And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace."

-Acts 20:32 (Paul, in a farewell address to the Elders in Ephesus)

Ministry calls for such an extraordinary kind of relationship between pastor and people.

Pastors are both set apart and called to live alongside the people to whom they serve. Pastors are loved as friends, but reminded to be prophets in residence. Pastors are called to live in emotional solidarity with congregants, yet also called, even expected, to stand above the fray of human living. Pastors are called to be faithfully transparent in all matters while also called weekly to hear, carry and protect deep confidences. But perhaps most confusing, pastors are also sometimes called to say farewell to those whom they love deeply.

Some say a Pastor and people share a sort of covenantal marriage bond. Pastor and people are abidingly faithful to one another. As in marriage, pastor and people have and hold dear one another, in times of prosperity and poverty, in times of sickness and health.

And yet, unlike the covenantal marriage vow we don't insist that the pastor make a life-time commitment to a congregation. We can't, not because our hearts sometimes want anything less, but because it's the nature of Christ's ministry that pastors receive new calls, in new places.

And so, with understandable emotional reservation we come to **Sunday, December 20**. After nearly 14 years of ministry with us as our beloved Associate Minister, Ray will formally retire during morning worship. With his retirement the nature of our relationship with him changes. Likewise, the nature of Ray's relationship with us changes.

Do we remain friends? Of course. Do we continue to care for and remember one another in our prayers? Of course. Will we worship together again? In time, I suspect we will. But with Ray's retirement some things change.

How, then, does the church relate to Ray in the weeks and months to come? In a document entitled **Covenant of Closure** provided to Disciples clergy from our denomination's General Office—a document which Ray and Larry Ross have discussed and accepted—the denomination strongly encourages certain relationship expectations between a minister and one's former charge. In summarizing the essence of this new relationship, Area Minister, Larry Ross, offers the following three specific ways that we can help Ray keep those expectations:



MOMENT'S REFLECTION — *continued*

1. *“Respect Ray’s need to be away from participation in our congregation for about six months. Please do not ask him to do pastoral calls, hospital calls, counseling, weddings or funerals of former parishioners, or to take any responsibilities until the end of next summer. Churches worldwide have found that such a period of being away is required so that the minister actually enters restful retirement, rather than reverting to being an unpaid extra staff member.*
2. *Understand that Ray will refrain from discussing problems he may see in this congregation with anyone other than his Area Minister, and will rely on the Area Minister if differences arise to resolve them.*
3. *At the end of six months Ray may choose to re-enter congregational life as a church member and participant. Please do not assume he will begin doing unpaid ministry functions. Ray has earned his retirement leisure!”*

At first glance, these expectations may seem unnatural, even perhaps unnecessary to some of you. But please understand.

Just as the terms of the **Covenant of Closure** helps Ray lean successfully into retirement, the Covenant also helps us successfully move forward. As Ray’s most recent charge, we have an important need to grieve and ultimately accept the end of one chapter of ministry in order to begin focusing on a new emerging chapter. To this end, the Covenant of Closure encourages some of the following:

1. Loving Ray and Laurie, and his family, and continuing to keep open the bonds of friendship, but permitting him the freedom to retire while also releasing him to new forms of ministry.
2. Maintaining great hope that with Christ alive in our Church, every ending is an interim period (a “Holy Saturday,” as Joyce Rupp puts it) during which Christ prepares us for what’s to come.
3. Giving both Pastors Allison and Casey your confidence that having been called to Christian Ministry and variously gifted, they, like Ray (like me), are able to serve our church’s pastoral needs in the years to come, and that we, the people, are ready to begin loving them as we have, and will continue, to love Ray.

—Dan, Advent 2015

DR. DAN ON VACATION—Monday, December 28 through Sunday, January 3, 2016

Following morning worship services, Sunday, December 27, Dr. Dan will begin a one-week time of vacation, returning to the office Monday, January 4, 2016. During this time, Dan kindly asks you to direct your phone calls, emails and texts to either **Pastor Allison** (214.517.8755, or allison@fccgarland.org), or **Pastor Casey** (817.879.6564, casey@fccgarland.org). Any messages you may choose to leave for Dan, will be returned when Dan returns to the office on Monday, January 4.



Please note that for non-pastoral related needs, our Office Admin Assistant, **Brenda Keel** (214.620.5279, or email officeadmin@fccgarland.org), will keep her regular office hours of 9:00am-2:00pm with the exception of Friday, January 1.

Pastors Allison and Casey will lead worship Sunday, January 3. Dan will return to the pulpit Sunday, January 10.

Dan reports that when he leaves the pulpit Sunday, December 27, he and Jenny will be retreating to a Montana state of mind—near a place the natives called “Lazy Guest Ranch.”

CHURCH LEADERSHIP NOTES



Even though we are presently immersed in the joy of Christmas, and the completion of an excellent year of church leadership, your church is busy making plans for the coming year. All incoming church leaders, please take note of the following January 2016 dates:

2016 Church Cabinet Planning

Saturday, January 9th; 10:00am-Noon in Fellowship Hall

All Board Officers and Ministry Chairs are kindly encouraged to attend the 2-hour event which is being designed to help build a vision for shared ministry goals in the coming year. The event will also include a time of guided meditation and Communion.

2016 Church Leadership Service of Consecration

Sunday, January 10th; Morning Worship, 9:00am

Here at the beginning of a New Year, we give our thanks for the faithful leadership of a year past, and turn with hopeful expectation to those whom God has called to lead us in the New Year.

First Meeting of 2016 Official Board

Monday, January 11th, 7:30pm in the Sanctuary

The Official Board is comprised of all Board Officers, Elders, Diaconate and Ministry Chairs.

Leader and Learner Event Saturday

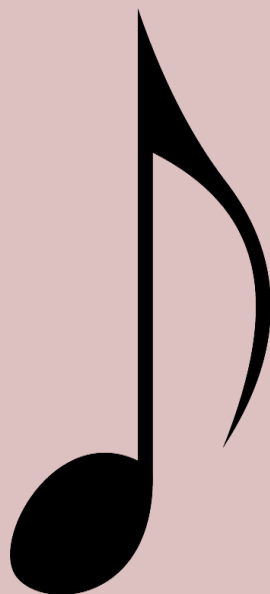
Saturday, January 30th, 9:00am-3:00pm at First Christian Church, McKinney

Registration for the North Texas Area annual event begins at 8:30am. Rev. Herb Lynskey, a former Area Minister and seasoned spiritual advisor, will deliver the keynote and teach two workshops on Spirituality afterwards. Several other practical-ministry workshops will be offered, with the schedule allowing participants to choose three (3) workshops through the day. Lunch is included in the \$20 registration fee. Pre-register by calling the Area Office at 972-272-2900.



Christmas Potluck

If anyone is going to be alone on Christmas Day, please come to the Worden's house for a potluck lunch. It will be at 1:00pm on December 25th. Call Nancy if interested at 972.975.8958.



CHANCEL CHOIR rehearsals are held on Wednesday evenings at 7pm. Contact Stan McGill if you are interested in joining.

CHILDREN'S CHOIRS rehearsals are held on Sunday Evenings — **Youth Choir** (3rd Grade and up) meets from 4:00pm-5:00pm. **Children's Choir** (4 yrs old through 2nd grade) meets from 5:30pm-7pm. Contact Tammy Holcomb for more information.

HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSALS are held on Wednesday evenings at 6:00pm. Contact Virginia McBee for more information.



The **FCCG QUILTING GROUP** donated 294 quilts in 2015. The quilts went to a new baby clinic at Presbyterian, Child Protective Services, and the V.A. Hospital. *The Quilting Group would like to thank the Church for its support of the Quilt Sale and the group's continuing ministry.*



Good Samaritans Needs Donations of Hygiene Kits for the Homeless of Garland

(Donation Box in Fellowship Hall)

Need Travel Size Items—

Moist wipes
Razors/Shaving Cream

Washcloths
Deodorant

Toothbrushes / Toothpaste
Soap

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MEALS ON WHEELS

We are in need of additional volunteers if our church is going to continue our ministry to the community in which we live! We deliver meals to homebound individuals every Monday.

Each volunteer only delivers one day a month with a time commitment of approximately 2 hours. **We currently need volunteers (one or two people) to deliver the second**

Monday of each month, and volunteers (one or two people) to deliver meals the

third Monday of each month. Our route is easy to learn (maps are provided) and training

will be provided the first time you deliver (one of our experienced volunteers will go with you). Coolers containing the meals for each route are delivered to First Presbyterian Church, located around the corner from our church, by 10:15am each day. Routes consist of one cooler filled with hot meals and one cooler containing cold items. After delivery of our route the empty coolers are returned to First Presbyterian for pickup.

Delivering meals through the Meals on Wheels program is one of the outreach ministries in which our church is involved. This is a program set up to provide a hot, nutritious midday meal to those individuals unable to prepare a meal for themselves. The people who receive this benefit are appreciative of the care and time given to them. For some, this is the only source of food they eat daily. We would like to continue our support of this worthwhile program by providing volunteers to cover a route each Monday.

I can guarantee you'll receive more than you give from this wonderful ministry to our community! Please contact Elaine Roeger at 972.926.1074 to volunteer or with any questions.

TOGETHER WE CAN DRIVE AWAY HUNGER!!



MID-WINTER RETREAT REGISTRATION

Mid-Winter Retreat Registration for 3rd-12th graders is live! If your youth is interested in going, please go to www.disciplescrossing.org to register.

Please let Pastor Allison know you are going BEFORE you register. The cost is \$90 per youth.

The weekends are as follows: High School is February 19th-21st; Middle School is February 5th-7th; 3rd-5th Grade is January 22nd-24th.



CROSSROADS SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS AND DISCIPLES

WOMEN'S MINISTRY unite for **Sweater Drive**, asking for donations of blankets, hats, gloves, and cold weather clothing for the homeless; a donation box is in Fellowship Hall.

January 10th will be **Sweats Sunday** at FCCG. In exchange for a donation to the **Sweater Drive**, you are encouraged to wear sweats to church.

Chris McMillan

NEW MAINTENANCE/SERVICE REQUEST FORM

In the new year, we would like to move to using a new form for requesting church maintenance. The new form is below. Beginning in January, 2016, these forms will be available in the Church Office and Fellowship Hall. Completed forms may be turned in to the Church Office. We hope this new form will result in quick attention to the maintenance/service needs around the Church.



FACILITIES DEPARTMENT MAINTENANCE/SERVICE REQUEST FORM

Requested <u>By</u> :	Ministry:	Date:
<i>Check all that apply</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Repair/Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Up <input type="checkbox"/> Special Set-up <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency/Safety Hazard <input type="checkbox"/> Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Routine Request	Description of Request:	
Room and/or Location of Request:		
Desired Completion Date:		
<i>Facilities Department Only</i>		
Date Received: _____		
Date Assigned: _____	Assigned to: _____	
Date Completed: _____	Approved by: _____	
Notes: _____		



WHAT DO I DO WITH THIS FORM?

Please place the original in the Administrator box under the stairs outside Fellowship Hall

PRAYER REQUESTS

Circle of Fellowship

Erlinda Martinez
Tommie Potts

Cup of Life

Robbie Collister
Richard Rogers

Hands of Faith

Bobbie Caldwell
Gary Carroll
Mary Carroll

The Grapevine

Judi Archibald
Joyce Witt Boyd
Dylan Godwin

Elders-On-Call for December:

John Grasham
(214.704.1934)

David Worden
(972.475.8958)

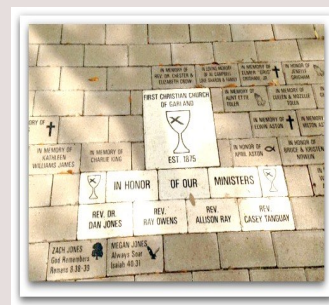


INVENTORY OF CHURCH KEYS

We are making our yearly accounting of keys to the Church. If you have a key to the church, please provide the Church Office with the key number (it's stamped on the key); you can leave a note in the Administrator box under the stairs by Fellowship Hall, call the church at 972.272.5423; or email the church at officeadmin@fccgarland.org. If you have a church key you are no longer using, please return it to the Church Office, as we are running low on extra keys. Thank you.

BUY A BRICK

Contact Kathleen Yant;
kyant1@aol.com, 972.496.0534 or
Eva McKannan,
patevamck@verizon.net; 972.414.1737



HOMEBOUND COMMUNION

is served on the first Sunday of each month by an Elder. If you would like to be served, please contact the Church Office.

The Messenger



A publication of First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ

115 South Glenbrook Drive, Garland, Texas, 75040