

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
200 South Nolan River Road  
Cleburne, Texas 76033

Return Service Requested



# The Disciple Contact

Church: (817) 645-4479

e-mail: [fcccleburne@gmail.com](mailto:fcccleburne@gmail.com)

Issue: Dec. 2011

website: <http://www.fcccleburne.org>

## WAYNE'S WANDERINGS

Wow! Another Advent season is before us. Life is a temporary assignment and we get to cycle through seasons, life passages and challenges. We make choices off this freedom and then someday will stand before Pappa God (or just Holy God if you are not part of the Family) - and we will get to hear His evaluation of our life assignment. We are saved by grace, but we live by choice. If God does come back before our bodies give out, I want Him to find us busy about His work, making Him proud and making His Son famous in our world. There are some who claim His Name but they sure don't represent Him well. It is embarrassing some days to tell folks you are one of His and they ask if you are related to another who rudely and crudely claims to be part of the Family of God.

This Season, be sure to make Jesus famous wherever you go. Return kindness for rude, patience for irritation and love for meanness. Fill your cup with God's grace and mercy and pour it out all day. If you empty out before the end of the day, find a quiet place to refill your

inner being with God's goodness. Your family, your God and your self will love you for giving love, joy, peace, mercy and grace during the season. By Christmas day you will be so happy that you will say "Ho, Ho, Ho! Merry Christmas to all and to all....let's eat!"



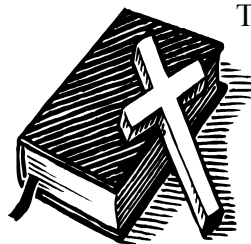
Did I get that right???? Oh well, I will see you in Church, even if it is Christmas Day!

*Da Rev*

## CLEBURNE CHRISTMAS PARADE DEC 2<sup>ND</sup>

We will have a float in the City Christmas Parade on Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Susan Smithwick and others are putting the float together, and if you want to help, give her a call (817-774-6242). We hope you can either help build, give to it or wave at it in the parade on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The parade starts at 7 PM.

## CHRISTMAS OFFERING



This Basic Mission Finance

Offering goes to fund the Regional ministries of the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, especially the Church camp ministry that is so vital to our church. The envelopes will

be in the Bulletins on Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>. Give as God leads.

## CHRISTMAS EVE



*"This time of year the church bells ring and carolers on corners sing, of gifts, of love and peace and cheer, and a happy, prosperous New Year. This time of year the children's glee, at sitting there on Santa's knee and telling him what he should bring on Christmas Eve." ~Del "Abe" Jones*



## DECEMBER YOUTH NEWS & NOTES

Dear Friends,

I wish that these newsletter articles had time stamps. I am currently writing this at 1:15 in the morning, after an amazing weekend with the High School Youth at Athens! We had a great time, playing, loving, singing, and learning and I love how our church supports these young men and women! They really are going to be great leaders in the future!

The Fiesta dinner was a hit! We made (drum roll....) **ONE THOUSAND TWENTY FOUR DOLLARS AND TWENTY ONE CENTS!** With the money we made today we can officially pay for almost everything for the high school youth room! How awesome!

The groups have also officially named themselves as well! The high school youth group will be henceforth be known as **IMPACT** and the junior high group will be known as **Breakout**. I don't know about you, but I can already see the shirt designs now!

I will be gone two Sundays coming up soon – spending time with the family. A much needed extended stay, enjoying the benefits of cold winters in northern Missouri! I will be gone over the Sundays of December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> (those sound like holidays if I remember correctly...) But I will return rejuvenated and ready to take on the New Year.

Well – I have a flight to Oregon here in about 10 hours. Gotta finish packing and then off to bed...

Oh... Bed...

Love Y'all!

Pastor Steven

If you have questions call or email me at 816-589-2279 or [steven.burr@tcu.edu](mailto:steven.burr@tcu.edu)

## SERMONS FOR DECEMBER

**December 4** – "What Difference Can One Baby Make?" Matthew 1:18-25

**December 11**– "The Cradle That Rocked The World." Luke 1:67-80

**December 18** – "The First Holiday Singers!" Luke 2:8-18

**December 25** – "My Eyes Have Seen Thy Salvation!" Luke 2:25-33 (a 10 AM, one hour service)

**January 1** – "And They Returned By A Different Way!" Matthew 2:1-15 (a 10 AM, one hour breakfast service)

## LAY WORSHIP LEADERS

December 4 Becky Hightower

December 11 Ken Ellis

December 18 Susan Ellis

## ELDERS AT THE TABLE

December 4 Bob Brown & Fred Bennett

December 11 Ken & Susan Ellis

December 18 John & Lynda Hathaway

December 25 Cindy Ashlock & Chuck Bailey

## WEDNESDAY MEALS

December 7 Beans & Cornbread

December 14 Bar-B-Que Chicken

December 21 A Christmas Dinner

December 28 No Meal

## DECEMBER CLASS HOSTING AND COMMUNION PREPARATION

Class Hosting Discovery

Communion Wayne & Cindy Ashlock

## ATTENDANCE & GIVING REPORT

		Attendance	Reg Offering	Other Giving
Oct	30	131	\$2416.37	\$440.50
Nov	6	111	\$6686.00	\$35.50
Nov	13	125	\$2185.00	\$170.50
Nov	20	132	\$2616.00	\$175.50

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

On **Dec. 4th**, we will have our Annual Congregational Meeting, electing new leadership and adopting a budget for 2012. We will have it right after Worship and hope you look at the slate of officers and the budget that is provided in this newsletter. All members of our church have a vote and are expected to be a part of the decision making process that guides God's work here at First Christian. See you ALL on Dec. 4th

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE!!!



Most of you have been to our annual beautiful Christmas Eve Service.

We meet at 6 PM, hear the Christmas story, sing, light the Christ Candle, take a special offering for the poor, share in Holy

Communion and light our candles, raising them to seek the Christ Child. This one hour beautiful service is a must to make your Christmas an awesome event. Come and bring the family!

## ADVENT POINTS TO CHRISTMAS!

We are in the **Season of Advent**, seen by changing of colors and decoration of the Sanctuary and putting up the huge Chrismon Tree! We will light **candles of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy** and then on **Christmas Eve** we will light the **Christ Candle** in celebration of Christ's coming to be the Savior of the world. The **Holiday Singers** will sing special music all through the month. We will have opportunities for you to give extra to folks in the Crisis Shelter and in the Lodge. We will have parties, meals, Children's Program followed by gifts and Santa. We will have a special one hour worship on Christmas Day (10 AM) and a brunch on New Year's Day (10 AM). Mark the articles below and plan for a great **Holy Days Season!** For you who get this via E-mail, first will be decoration of the Church at **10 AM on Saturday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>**. It's hard but fun work as we get ready for the First Sunday of Advent.

**Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>** - the Sunday of Hope - **Ken and Eileen Sickels** will **light the Candle of Hope** and Pastor Steven will lead us in decorating the **Chrismon Tree** (a Christmas tree decorated only with symbols of Christ and the salvation He brings). Pastor Jimmy Finley will preach a sermon, "New Life from a Nearly Dead Stump."

**Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>** - We will have a **float** in the **City Christmas Parade** at **7 PM** and we will need you to help Susan Smithwick put it together. Also that evening at **6 PM**, many will gather for **Game Night**, bringing some food **AND a White Elephant Gift** to exchange and steal and have fun with.

**Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>** - **Jane and Butch Silvey** will lead us in lighting the **Candle of Peace** and Pastor Wayne will bring a sermon, "What Difference Can One Baby Make?" Also **Congregational Meeting right after Worship**

**Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>** - We will feed those in the **Lodge** a special meal (Christmas Mexican Feast) and give them some special gifts of love, hugs and more.

**Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>** - **Lilly Ewing and Family** will lead out in lighting the **Candle of Joy** and Pastor Wayne will preach a sermon, "The Cradle That Rocked the World".

**Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>** - the **Deacons** will light the **Candle of Love** and Pastor Wayne will preach a sermon, "The First Holiday Singers". **ALL** of us will gather at **6 pm** for the **Children's Christmas Program**, followed by **Christmas foods, drinks and Santa**.

You are to **bring your favorite Christmas snack** and the church will provide the drinks of the season.

**Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>** - We will have our awesome and now famous **Christmas Eve Service**, starting at **6 PM**. We will read the Christmas story, have great singing, take communion, **light the Christ Candle** and then lift our candles to seek the Christ Child in our midst. Truly an awesome hour that will make your **Christmas bright!**

**Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>** - Since Christmas Day is a Sunday, we will gather at **10 AM** for some Christmas morning snacks and drinks and have an informal, short, sweet service.

**Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>** is a Sunday also, and we will have the men cook a huge breakfast and meet in the Fellowship Hall at **10 AM** for a worship around the meal, breaking bread and sharing the cup in Christ's name, a one hour informal time together to start off the new year..

All through the Season, the Holiday Singers will sing special Christmas songs. This is a group that you can be a part of, just folks who love Christmas songs and will practice on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings early. If you want to sing with them, let Adrienne Anderson know or call the office and we will tell you when the next practice is. Also through the season we will have excerpts out of the movie, "A Christmas Carol" with George C. Scott. We will have an opportunity for you to give a Christmas Blessing to folks from the Crisis Center and the Lodge. We will take up the **Basic Mission Finance Christmas Offering** that goes to support our awesome Southwest Disciples Region. Most of all, in a world of selfishness and commercialism, we will let Jesus know we love Him and are thankful that He came as Immanuel, God With Us.



## **PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE NAMED!**

As Pastor Wayne enters into a new phase of serving God called "Retirement", the Board has put together a Pastor Search Committee. Those serving you in this capacity are Chuck Bailey (Committee Chairperson), George Smithwick, Ken Ellis, Janice Edwards, Sherry Cooper, Cherri Utley, Eddie Norton, Fred Bennett and Jimmy Finley. The first thing this committee will do is find an Interim Pastor to fill in immediately. This person will be your Pastor and do the work of Senior Pastor on a short term basis. While the Interim Pastor is here the Committee will then search for a Pastor who will hopefully be here for many years. Be in prayer for this group and if you have any questions or ideas, give them a call.



## ***I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY***

*I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along the unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*Till ringing, singing on its way  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And in despair I bowed my head  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail  
With peace on earth, good will to men."  
~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

## **WHAT COMMITTEE ARE YOU ON?**

It was brought to our attention that some of you don't know we have 7 functioning committees that get the work of the church done week by week. Each committee needs at least two of you to help the Chair person do God's work through this church. Here they are, volunteer for a committee by calling the office and telling Tamara (817-645-4479)!

**Worship** - Working on weekly times of worship and music, planning special seasonal worship times.

**Stewardship** - Plans the Stewardship drive and raises monies for special needs.

**Membership** - Stimulate and encourage participation among the members for all activities of the congregation.

**Outreach** - Helping the congregation be sensitive and responsive to the benevolence and mission needs of our world.

**Church Growth** - Encouraging people to make a commitment to Christ and new members to get involved in their faith

**Property** - Overseeing the needs of the Church properties, making sure we have an awesome place to serve God from.

**Education** - Making sure we teach the Word of God to all who come to this church.

Call today and get on a committee and "Make God Proud and Jesus Famous!"

## **CHRISTMAS MEANS GIVING!**

The Outreach Committee is working with the Cleburne Crisis Shelter to find names and needs of their people. We will need gifts for children and their parents, unwrapped, and these need to be at the church by December 18th. We will have the needs list on the bulletin board by the Nursery. We also will have a need for Christmas giving for folks in the homeless shelter but since that is so fluid; we probably won't know exactly what is needed until the week before Christmas. Also remember your Christmas Jars, taking them to a doorstep as God guides on Christmas Eve. Finally, the Christmas Eve Offering goes to help a family in need and we will share more on that when we select the family. Give a gift for Jesus' birthday!