

Central Area Churches Praying for Churches Weeks of:
August 30 — Edmond First Christian Church: Chris Shorow, Jerry Black, Chuck Shorow

Attendance		Giving	
Sunday Worship	46	Giving for operations	\$2,302.26
Emerging Worship	8	Giving for capital	0.00
Total	54	Giving for outreach	0.00
Sunday School	18	Giving total	\$2,302.26

Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity; you love righteousness and hate wickedness. Psalm 45: 6-7 NRSV

Keep Us Informed
Please contact your church if you or a loved one is ill, injured, in the hospital, needs special prayer, wants a visit, or has other needs.

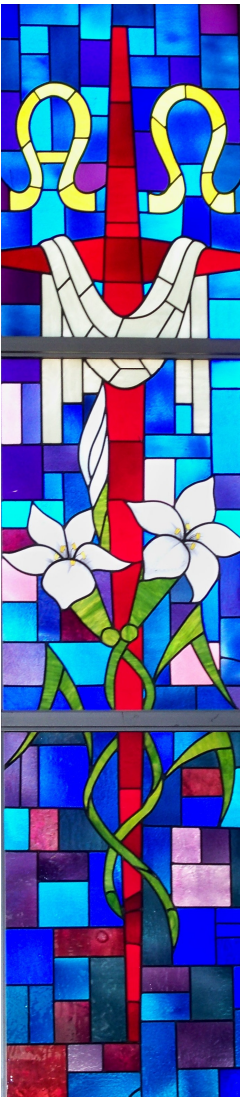
Pastor Ray's: Cell Phone-405-833-2272
Email-raybelford@hotmail.com
Office: (405) 275-1525

Office Hours
Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Lunch times vary
Email: office@fccshawnee.com
Church Website: www.fccshawnee.com

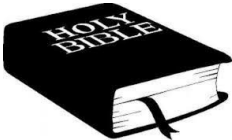


Please, HELP US with the Pumpkin Patch

1. Help unload.
2. Count pumpkins during unloading.
3. Provide water to those who unload.
4. Sign-up for the blood drive.
5. Be a sitter or keep a worker company.
6. Visit and talk to the customers.
7. Drop by and turn pumpkins.
8. Help bake rum cakes.
9. Provide Bundt pans.
10. Donate money for bridge refurbishing.
11. Be our face to potential congregants.
12. Paint pumpkins and ghosts.
13. Bake for the bake sale.
14. Read a story to school children.
15. Serve snacks to school children.
16. Decorate the Pumpkin Patch.
17. Bake pumpkin seeds.
18. Haul-off bad pumpkins.



Recycle — Donate



Bibles



Gently Worn Clothes



Pool Cues



Canning Jars and Lids

Please deliver to Fellowship Hall.



THE SHAWNEE CHRISTIAN

August 25, 2015



Dear FCC Family and Friends,

The Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor, in a sermon preached at Duke University Chapel a couple of years ago, said something that really peaked my interest. She says: “I wonder all the time about how Christianity would have shaped up if James had written half as many letters as Paul did.”

She goes on to point out that if you put all the letters of James, Peter, and John together—those who knew Jesus in the flesh—their combined witness is shorter than Paul’s two letters to the Corinthians. She says: “Paul—who never knew Jesus in the flesh—wrote a good hundred pages more than all the other letter writers put together, so that he was the one whose views of Jesus, God, Torah, church, ministry, women, sex, time, salvation, afterlife, and faith took root in the early church.”

So many churches seem to base their doctrinal beliefs on things that Paul wrote, rather than the simple message of Jesus. I believe Paul’s influence on the early church was so strong because most of his letters were written before the Gospel texts were written down and circulated. Many early Christians heard about Jesus through Paul’s writings, rather than the Gospels which focused on what Jesus actually did and said. I’ve said before that I wonder if Paul would have been as hard on women if he’d had the opportunity to have read Luke’s Gospel.

Because of the influence of Paul, the letters of James, Peter, and John, got relegated to the back of the New Testament and don’t show up very much in sermons or in readings.

It also didn’t help the popularity of James that, with the birth of Protestantism, Martin Luther didn’t like the Epistle of James. He called it an “epistle of straw.” Among the reasons (for Luther not liking the letter of James) included his belief that James isn’t very sophisticated theology. James doesn’t include much about the cross, doesn’t talk about Jesus, nor does it espouse Paul’s ideas of justification through grace and faith.

James does talk about living a good life, in a way that Luther thought was dangerous. Luther wasn’t opposed to living a good life; he just felt very strongly that living a good life is not how we are reconciled with God.

Yet, if we accept that we can never live a life that is good enough to earn us favor with God and that we are only saved by faith through grace, **then how do we live?**

James tells us that **how we live** revolves around two questions. Who is God? And, who are we? James tells us this in the beginning of the text which we will be exploring on Sunday. God is the One Who gives us everything, Who gives us life, Who gives us the Word of Truth, Who is constant and consistent, unchanging and unfailing. He then tells us that we are the first fruits of God’s creation. James is telling us that **we are to be the evidence of God’s goodness, God’s mercy for his creation, God’s intention to transform the world.** We are to be doers of the Word. James tells us that **how we live our lives is our witness**, and through our witness we become agents of God in reclaiming the world.

In returning to Taylor’s sermon, she says, “On my way to school every day I pass a church sign that says, ‘Well Done is Better than Well Said.’ That would make a great subtitle for the letter of James.”

James wants us to understand that when we truly believe the message of Jesus, it will show itself in our lives. **James was convinced that faith without works is not really faith.** He writes, **“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”** James 1:27 (NRSV)

The sermon title for Sunday is “God’s Agents” and is based on James 1:17-27.

If you are able, be in worship with your church family this Sunday. Remember we are now having one unified service 10-11 a.m.

Pastor Ray



Called Board Meeting

During the August 23 called meeting, the Official Board of First Christian Church honored Janet Peery by naming her pastor emeritus.

The board also approved the appointment of Mary Ann Luman as trustee. The current financial situation of the church was also discussed and will be studied further with specific action deferred until the regularly scheduled board meeting on September 13. The financial condition of the church has tightened significantly over the summer. Giving has rebounded some in August, but the church has begun to fall short of the monthly needs to cover all of our obligations. Two months ago, the board voted to remove \$5,000 from our reserves to the checking account.

It was revealed that a local community organization may be interested in leasing space on the south end of our education building. The board encouraged the senior pastor to continue exploring that possibility. This would be a temporary arrangement that would produce a revenue stream for a couple of years and provide a ministry service to the community. This should have no impact on our operations as the space is not needed at this time.

It was also reported that an invitation had been extended to United Presbyterian Church to share our facilities while they dispose of their current church building and move toward building a smaller church. We received thanks from the Presbyterians, but apparently their session (board) was fearful of losing their Presbyterian identity. If you read the Shawnee News-Star on Sunday, you know that last Sunday was the final service in their old church; and they plan, for the near future, to meet in rented space formerly occupied by Sips Cafe on Main Street.

There was also discussion about selling the vacant lot that the church owns between our south parking lot and Grave's Floral. An estimate of the value of the lot was not known at the time of the meeting but was received later in the day. The value placed by some local real estate agents is estimated at between \$25,000 and \$30,000—or more, depending on the intended use by the buyer. The consensus was that the church has no current need or projected need for the lot. There was concern expressed (if the lot were sold) over simply using the money for operations. A decision will be made at the September board meeting with the likely recommendation to sell the lot and transfer the funds to our reserve account. This would provide liquidity should an emergency arise.

In addition to the property, several other assets of the church which have not been used for many years were also mentioned as items that the church might sell. We have not had a bell choir in many years, yet the church has several octaves of quality hand bells. The church periodically gets a call from a man who reconditions bells and buys and sells bells. It was also mentioned that we have about 150 three-piece place settings of Frankoma Pottery in the green wagon wheel design. One suggestion is to divide the pottery into place settings for eight or twelve and offer them for sale during Pumpkin Patch. The church also has some sterling silver that hasn't been used in many years.

There was discussion about the possible revision of the bank loan on the elevator expansion project. The original loan was set up for ten years and roughly six years remain. Arvest Bank has indicated that restructuring the loan would be possible.

Much discussion centered on letting our participating members know about the tight financial situation and asking them to be regular in their giving and, if possible, increase their giving.

It was also suggested that members park in the south parking lot on Sunday as that is the lot that is most visible to people traveling on Broadway. People driving by see only a few cars, and it appears that nothing is going on at the church, even though the east parking lot may be mostly full.

The board is requesting any ideas from the congregation that might get us back on a solid financial footing which will also allow us to continue and grow our ministries.

Wed., Aug. 26—Boomer Bridge noon-5:00 p.m. **VBS 5:00 p.m.** Youth Group 6-8:00 p.m.

Emerging Worship 6:15-6:45 p.m.

Sat., Aug. 29—**Pumpkin Patch meeting 10:00 a.m.**

Sun., Aug. 30—Sunday school 9:00-9:30 a.m. Fellowship 9:30-9:50 a.m.

UNITED SERVICE 10 a.m.

Liturgical Worship and Christian Meditation 4-5:00 p.m.

Wed., Sept. 2—Boomer Bridge noon-5:00 p.m. **VBS 5:00 p.m.** Youth Group 5-7:00 p.m.

Emerging Worship 6:15-6:45 p.m.

Sun., Sept. 6—Sunday school 9:00-9:30 a.m. Fellowship 9:30-9:50 a.m.

UNITED SERVICE 10 a.m.

Liturgical Worship and Christian Meditation 4-5:00 p.m.

Wed., Sept. 9—Boomer Bridge noon-5:00 p.m. Youth Group 5-7:00 p.m.

Emerging Worship 6:15-6:45 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS — 5:00 P.M.



MILLENNIAL MINUTE

An important component of education and formation ministries (Youth and Young Adult Ministries falls into this category) is guiding people young and old into training and education programs that foster their vocational growth. With that in mind, I'd like to share a couple of opportunities for further education at Disciples institutions in our Region.

On the undergraduate level, Phillips Seminary is teaming up with Drury University (Springfield, MO) to provide more than twenty Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees in a variety of fields and disciplines. Additionally, Drury will be coordinating with Phillips Seminary to provide a "pre-seminary" degree for those who need undergraduate credentials to enter lay ministries or a graduate seminary degree program. Classes will be taught online and/or one day/evening a week at Phillips Seminary. This partnership will be a wonderful asset to our region!

For students with a Bachelor's degree, Phillips Seminary offers Masters Degrees in Divinity, Ministry and Culture, Social Justice and Theological Studies. It also offers Doctor of Ministry degrees to M.Div. graduates along with a host of certificate programs and continuing education opportunities. As a current seminary student, I can attest to the academic rigor and spiritual excellence of our seminary program. We are blessed to have this outstanding graduate theological seminary in the Oklahoma Region Disciples of Christ.

If you have any interest in formal theological education or a college degree, please be in touch. I'd welcome the opportunity to discuss your unique call to ministry, whatever that ministry may be. Prayerfully consider this question. "Is God calling me into greater service?" If the answer is "yes," let me put you in touch with the right people.

josh



Pumpkin Patch is selling RUM CAKES.

Order NOW.

Glenda Grubb 520-3484

FCC 275-1519 or 275-1525

CAKES \$20.00 EACH

Baking will be October 6th & 8th, with cakes available for pick-up October 10th.

Gail Reeves

Inter-generational Vacation Bible School is being held on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 6 p.m.

The plan is to meet each Wednesday through September 2.

While people of all ages will be participating, the emphasis will be on our younger ones.

The Youth Group will be assisting Carla Hale, Pastor Josh, Shelley Coffman, Pastor Ray, and other adult volunteers in the program.

Come for inter-generational fellowship, teaching, & learning about God's Word.

