

Central Area Churches Praying for Churches Weeks of Sept. 20 — Geary First Christian Church: Truman Ferguson

Attendance		Giving	
Sunday Worship	64	Giving for operations	\$2,921.53
Emerging Worship	8	Giving for capital	0.00
Total	72	Pumpkin Patch	436.00
Sunday School	N/A	Giving total	\$3,357.53

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**

For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

James 3:16-17 NRSV

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Lunch times vary

Email: office@fccshawnee.com

Church Website: www.fccshawnee.com



Dear FCC Family and Friends,

One of my favorite characters in the Dilbert cartoon series is a character named Topper. I think one of the reasons that I like the character is that, of all the characters in the cartoon strip, he seems the most familiar in today's world. If you are not familiar with the strip, Topper is the character that always has a story to "top" whatever story, idea, or accomplishment that any of the other characters tell or advance.

In many ways, Topper reminds me of many of the current crop of contestants running for president. I guess, one of the things that has really bothered me in recent years is that I always wonder about a candidate who has the ego to run in the first place. The one thing I've noticed about ego is that those with big egos too often find it difficult to admit that they don't have an answer to every problem that arises. However, one of the best attributes of a great leader is someone who realizes they don't have all the answers and are willing to admit they don't. The late Murlin Derebery, who was president of the First State Bank and a member of our church, said that the most important thing about leadership is: "You've got to know what you don't know."

You may be wondering what this has to do with scripture, but I'm getting there.

We discover in Mark's Gospel that the disciples seem to have some ego issues and became so involved in acting like Topper, that they were not listening to what Jesus was telling them about what was going to happen to him. They may not have been listening to Jesus, but apparently Jesus was listening to them. He knew that they had been arguing about who would be the greatest and who would be the least among His disciples.

You can imagine that Peter was probably the most vocal "Topper" of all, but don't forget that James and John were known as "Son's of Thunder." I kind of hate to put it in these terms, but, today, we'd probably say they were "trash talking" one another.

Unfortunately, we still see egotistical behavior going on among Christ's disciples today. I once wrote a short play with the title of "The Call". I'll admit now, that I was being pompous. You see, I was an older-than-the-norm student at OBU, and it seemed that all the ministerial students were focused on getting graduate degrees because that meant they would get a bigger, better paying church, which would then lead to another bigger, better paying church, etc. Somehow, back then and still today, I don't think God works that way. But, it is rare when you see a successful preacher called to a smaller, lower-paying church. Of course success in most churches is based on statistics which often put too much emphasis on growing the budget, increasing attendance, and building expansions, rather than providing meaningful services of giving drink to the thirsty, food to the hungry, clothing the naked, providing hospitality to the homeless, caring for those in prison (both prisons with bars and prisons of addiction), caring for the sick, the widows, and the orphans.

I believe what Jesus said to his disciples, he still says to us today. **He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last and servant of all."** Mark 9:36 NRSV

Of course, there are some who also make being last an ego thing. I remember visiting Linda's class one day when she was still teaching, and the kids were lining up to go to lunch. One little boy, with a bit of a proud smirk on his face strutted around and went to the back of the line. He looked at me and said with a bit of a superior attitude, "I'm last because I want to be last." For some of us it is hard to be humble, isn't it?

Unfortunately, it seems that it is difficult to find a Godly person who isn't at least a bit conflicted on how we should behave. Being human, we can develop an ego over our service, just as easily as we can with our worship, giving, or positions of power.

I read something this past week about what happened during a search for a new president for the St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City. This happened several years ago. More than 100 people applied, and the search committee narrowed the search down to five eminently qualified candidates. Then someone came up with a brilliant idea. They went to the institutions of the five candidates and interviewed the custodians, asking them what they thought of the candidate. One candidate received such glowing praise that he was selected to the position.

Somebody on that search committee understood that those who live close to Christ become so secure in their love that ego doesn't get in the way, and they no longer relate to other people according to rank, power, money, or prestige. They treat custodians and governors with equal dignity. They regard everybody as a VIP.

Let us not fall into the "Topper" mentality, but let us be found where, through our love and humility, people get a glimpse of Jesus.

The sermon title for Sunday is "Understanding Greatness" and is based on Mark 9:30-37.

If you are able, be in worship with your church family this Sunday and bring a friend.

Pastor Ray

PUMPKIN PATCH is selling Rum Cakes

Order before **October 5th.**
Glenda Grubb 520-3484
FCC 275-1519
CAKES \$20.00 EACH

Baking will be October 6th & 8th,
with
Pick-up will be Saturday,
October 10th.

They freeze very well!



We will be contacting Marcia in order to honor her with a reception. She has been an inspiration as a model of Christianity. Her ever-present grace in the face of turmoil is a blessing and an example for us all.

Wed., Sept. 16—Boomer Bridge noon-5:00 p.m. **Youth Group 5-7:00 p.m.**
Emerging Worship 6:15-6:45 p.m.

Sun., Sept. 20—**National Back to Church Sunday**
Sunday school 9:00-9:30 a.m. Fellowship 9:30-9:50 a.m.
UNITED SERVICE 10 a.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal 11:15-12:00.
Liturgical Worship and Christian Meditation 4-5:00 p.m.

Mon., Sept. 21—Sine Nomine 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Wed., Sept. 23—Boomer Bridge noon-5:00 p.m. **Youth Group 5-7:00 p.m.**
Emerging Worship 6:15-6:45 p.m.

Mon., Sept. 21—**International Day of Peace**

Wed., Sept. 23—**Fall begins in the northern hemisphere** Boomer Bridge noon-5:00 p.m.
Youth Group 5-7:00 p.m. Emerging Worship 6:15-6:45.

Sun., Sept. 27—Sunday school 9:00-9:30 a.m. **Chancel Choir returns!**
UNITED SERVICE 10 a.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal 11:15-12:00.

Set-Up for Pumpkin Patch 1:30 p.m. (No pumpkins this time.) Please help.
Liturgical Worship and Christian Meditation 4-5:00 p.m.





Board Report

The Official Board of First Christian Church met Sunday, September 13, following worship. There were several reports presented to the board for discussion and action.

On a sad note, the board accepted **with extreme regret** the resignation of Marcia Scott as Music Director due to family obligations related to her brother's health. At Marcia's request, the resignation is effective immediately. A copy of Marcia's Letter is on the facing page. Steve Scott announced that he would be resigning as elder to help Marcia with providing care and assistance for her brother.

Associate and Youth Pastor Josh Miller-Shawnee was approved by the board to add Music Director duties to his responsibilities with his salary to include what Marcia had been paid. He will still serve as youth director. Keith Whitmore, who played Sunday, has agreed to be the church pianist and accompanist at this time. Pastor Josh plans to convene the choir this coming Sunday to begin rehearsals immediately following worship service.

Pastor Ray gave an update on the financial situation which showed some improvement during the month of August. On a year-to-date basis through August, expenses were within what was budgeted for the first eight months. The financial shortfall is in giving where the actual giving was 84.6% of what was forecast. The pastor reported that giving for the first week of September was good due mainly to one significant donation.

The board was updated on several items that were discussed at a special board meeting in August.

The pastor reported that interest has been expressed by District Attorney Richard Smothermon to possibly locate offices for the launching of the Family Justice Project in rooms on the south end of the church's education wing. Smothermon visited once with an assistant DA, but then requested another visit on Friday, September 4, when he brought about fifteen additional people to look at the facility. In those discussions, it was determined that Smothermon wants to move the Department of Human Services Child Welfare unit to space on the first floor. In addition, law enforcement officers from the city and county who handle child sexual abuse and child abuse cases would be located on the second floor along with members of the district attorney's staff.

The total space would be approximately 3,000 square feet. During the meeting Pastor Ray was directed to continue discussions and negotiations with the district attorney's office to see whether this offer might be brought to an agreement that will both benefit the church and help establish the beginning a Family Justice Center in Shawnee, Pottawatomie, and Lincoln County.

If this happens, we will be assisting and participating in a much needed ministry in our community. Pastor Ray reported that due to protecting the names of the victims, the public is generally unaware of the level of abuse and rape in our community.

If this proposed arrangement happens, the space would probably be leased space for two to three years depending on how quickly they could raise approximately \$7 million to build a permanent Family Justice Center.

[NOTE: Pastor Ray received a call on Monday following the board meeting and the regional director for DHS's Shawnee office was reassigned and that portion of the plan will be put on hold until a replacement is named. However, the Family Justice Project planning group is interested in reaching an agreement to initially use part of the space as soon as possible.]

Tabled was the idea of listing the vacant lot the church owns between the south parking lot and Graves Floral.

Gary Heilman was appointed to head up a committee to take inventory of assets the church owns which have not been used in many years that might be sold. Items that have been mentioned are the hand bells, hand-bell tables, and stands; a set of puppets that were purchased several years ago (these are "Muppet" style puppets); and a Frankoma Pottery service for about 150 (dinner plates, saucers, and cups) that has been unused for more than 25 years.

A nominating committee was approved to present candidates for 2016 officers of the church board, deacons, elders, and trustee. The committee will be Gary Heilman, John Broomfield, Larry Peery, Nelda Ward, and Jennifer Freed, with Jessie Randall as an alternate.

The board also approved allowing the Square 8's square dance club to again use our Fellowship Hall on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for square dancing lessons. The lessons will begin on January 19, 2016, and run for ten weeks.

Marcia Scott
Music Director
First Christian Church
Shawnee, OK



Dear Board of Directors:

It is with regret that I submit this letter of resignation as Music Director at First Christian. I do it with a heavy heart as my tenure here has been an enjoyable one.

As you know my brother is having some difficulties and I feel that I must spend more time with him. As I work during the week it seems that the only time I can set aside is the weekend. As much as I hate to resign, I feel it is necessary at this time.

I do hope that you can quickly fill this spot and move forward with the work of this church. There is much yet to be done here. You have all been wonderful to me and I will miss this weekly time of worship with you.

Respectfully Submitted

Marcia Scott

ASSOCIATE MINISTRY MATTERS

As you may have heard, on Sunday I accepted a call from the Board and leadership of our congregation to extend my pastoral duties to include responsibility for music ministry at First Christian Church.

I embraced these responsibilities with a heavy heart at the encouragement of our beloved Marcia Scott. I am most thankful for her continued friendship, and I look forward to her continued guidance and mentorship. I am also grateful for the sound guidance and ceaseless support of our Senior Pastor, Board Chair and Board. Their consistent affirmation of my vocation to ministry has been a constant source of strength. I am blessed to be raised up by such an affirming community of faith. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your ongoing prayers and support!

In related news, **we will have our very first Choir rehearsal this Sunday from 11:15-12:00 in the Choir Room!** We will begin preparing immediately for our Christmas cantata in addition to preparing music for weekly worship. The robbed choir will return to the chancel on the 27th of this month, and we will offer our first anthem on October 4th. Please join me in celebrating the return of our Chancel Choir!

Finally, we are actively seeking new choristers to join our ranks! If you enjoy singing, prayerfully consider attending a rehearsal. There is no audition for this ensemble and we are a fun bunch. It's a great way to make new friends, contribute to the life of our community of faith and worship the God who gives all good gifts! We plan to rehearse on Sunday after worship so the time commitment is minimal. Additionally, I have an incredible Christmas cantata to show you on Sunday. You do not want to miss this!

Come sing with us!

Musically,

